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CINEMA
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NO ANSWERS

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Epicenter, 11/10/90, photo McClard

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I can taste this patriotism—sour, rotten, it lingers in my mouth. This flag that waves so high, so significant, so symbolic to a proud war-like people. America. A people of war. Sown from the fruit of bullets, from the edge of a blade, from the blood of thine enemy. Fire and steel, fire and stone, patriotism grown from the darkest tradition. We are the children of warriors, we are warriors. Our land—a stolen land, our tradition—a deception, our dreams—so vulgar, our god—so human, our power, our power shall reap violence upon all that challenge the order of our god, country, and tradition. Understand world, we, WE ARE AMERICA, we are the warriors of light and truth, consistency and honor, prepare to feel our righteous all-consuming love. Prepare to die. Die.

War in the Middle East. What's new? Have things changed, or are they simply more overt? America is built on an industry that produces war. The corporations build war. They manufacture the missile guidance systems, the tanks, the ships, the mines, the fire bombs, the napalm, the mustard gas, the uniforms, the egos, and ultimately the corporations create the wealth that we kill for. Saddam Hussein is a mad man, just as George Bush, Jabbar al Ahmed al Sabah, and the president of I.B.M. and General Electric and Raytheon and N.B.C. and the list goes on. They are all mad in their desire to be all powerful, in their desire to control the world's resources while the people around them are tortured, murdered, and starved by the greed of the wealthy. A country, a world of mad men (men in all their machismo violence and attitude). We wanted this war so desperately. Our economy screamed for war. Our foreign policy screamed for war. Our people began to plant the seeds of peace; the arms race, the military build up was slowly beginning to decrease, but the voices of people amount to little when the needs of a screaming, dying system demand survival. The military industrial complex, this vaporous term that we throw around, it exists. It is our economy, our way of life. No company is free from the twisted connection. The fate of America desperately depends on the ever present war. The industry of war is in many ways the welfare program of the conservatives. No free lunch in America. Instead, our government supports a useless industry in order to keep people employed. We must spend billions and billions of dollars on war in order to provide jobs, in order to provide profit, in order to keep the gears rotating. And then we must sell this war to the world—like all products, war must have a consumer. Weapons are sold to the Third World for both cash and political power. We prop up Third World dictators with the most powerful war machine that money can buy. The people of Central America can attest to the efficiency of the U.S. product. Our weapons kill, guaranteed. If not we'll send you some more. We gladly sold weapons covertly and overtly to both Iran and Iraq as we sat back and laughed as they chewed themselves up with our consumer goods. In eight years 700,000 Iranian soldiers went down under the Iraqi war machine; a machine manufactured by Western nations, weapons made in France, America, the U.S.S.R., gas made in Germany. Buy this war said capitalism; they bought it with their lives. As I write, as you read, the U.S. provides loans to Syria in the form of war credits that can only be spent on U.S. made war merchandise. In a year, in three years will it be any surprise when we invade Syria—a country with astronomical human rights violations. No it will be no surprise. The surprise is that it is a surprise. No one can manufacture, market and eventually sell a war quite like America can.

America is in trouble. War is endangered. The world community can move forward increasing ties and connections, creating a system where war hurts all, but how can a giant like America stand when it is a nation of warriors? Like an old soldier, we must prove our necessity. As conflicts vanish, new ones are fabricated for our viewing pleasure.

If America is a peace loving nation, then why does it manufacture war? Why does it sell war to the world? If America loves peace then why did it sell cocaine and marijuana to buy weapons for the Contras? If America is concerned with the Geneva conventions then why did we bomb the Iraqi nuclear reactors? If America loves tranquility and justice then why did the State department give Iraq the green light to invade Kuwait? What? You didn't know? It wasn't on the television? The Pentagon didn't brief you on these events? Our free press didn't tell you? Here now is a tale of diplomacy...

The Iraqi government discussed the possibility of invading Kuwait with

April Glaspie, a U.S. official who had spoken directly to the state department on this matter. She told Iraq officials that the U.S. reaction would be to continue their hands-off policy (eight months latter she denied this, but conveniently not under oath). It was the official policy of the current administration to keep out of Mid-East affairs. We told them that we would do nothing if they invaded Kuwait, but secretly we eagerly craved this invasion. The very week that congress was about to make sweeping cuts in the military budget, the very week that the B-2 was about to lose funding, just then, conveniently a nasty little "Hitler" named Saddam threatens the world. America, the white knight in shining armor must rush to the rescue with its arsenal of peace keeping technology. Our system of war saved just in time from the clutches of insanity. An embargo would never work, at least not for an impatient peace-loving people of war who have been bred on forty-five second commercials and thirty second news reports. And as peace plans looked promising Bush pushed up the land invasion to assure that war was not denied to America in our time of need—the healing process of Vietnam is finally completed as America once again learns how to win a war. Grenada and Panama were just a little to small to complete that all so important process of national redemption. And there could not possibly be a justifiable explanation for Iraq's motives, though of course we can easily justify our invasion of Grenada and Panama, and our funding of the life loving death squads in El Salvador. There was no mention of the fact that Kuwait had been encroaching on Iraqi territory, and that Kuwait had hired a U.S. oil company based out of Santa Fe, New Mexico to operate slant drilling wells that could suck the oil out of neighboring Iraqi oil fields. No, no discussion of that. And there was no discussion of the fact that Kuwait is not a democracy, and that less than 3% of the population is allowed to vote for the politically ineffective National Council. None of that was important, because we are Americans, so close to God, to truth, not like the wretched stinking heathen dark skinned Nazi-like Arabs. Kill 'em all and let (our) God sort them out, and then sit back at home and pin little yellow ribbons to our clothing to signify that we have been victimized by the dominating evil of Saddam Hussein. Now, once again, there will be peace in our time, or at least until Jimmy, a seven year old American youth who was quoted by the *L.A. Times* as saying that it would be cool to be in the Gulf, grows up and starts to desire some of that glory and adventure that our brave fighting boys were treated to back in the early '90s. Business as usual for the merchants of death.

— Kent

America—a land of peace loving people.

The driver gets out of the car and lies face-down on the pavement apparently following the peace officers' instructions. The peace officers surround the man, swinging their nightsticks. The beating accelerates with one peace officer swinging his stick wildly back and forth as the man hunches on his knees, attempting to cover his face and head. The heavy-set black man, dressed in light pants and a dark T-shirt, then rolls to the ground on his stomach. Several peace officers continue whacking him across the back of the legs, the kidney area, the neck and about the head. At one point, the man is surrounded by as many as ten peace officers, most of whom stand and watch their colleagues. At no time does the man appear to offer any resistance. Mostly, the man rolls about, as though in pain. He appears to be crying out. He is still for several seconds, then one peace officer stomps his head with a foot and kicks the man. Other peace officers join in. Another peace officer holds a wire that is attached to the man's neck. The peace officers then "hog-tied" him, binding his back, and left him that way on a lawn until an ambulance arrived to take him away. A police spokesman latter reports that "the arrestee did not go along willingly."

Sometimes peace has to be enforced,
by any means possible.

Police incident taken from *Los Angeles Times*, March 5th, 1991

Amenity were perhaps one of the best bands from Southern California. Their music was original and emotional, while their lyrics were solid and expressive. As a band they were also committed to a lot of the basic ideals of punk rock, and in that they served as a counter balance to a lot of the more commercial and stagnant hardcore bands in the area, which is not to say that Amenity was some cohesive single minded entity. Rather, it was the combined output of four completely different people. They live different lives, they hold different beliefs, and they expound different ideologies. Amenity will be missed, but, for better or worse, the four characters that created that band are definitely still around. — Kent

KENT: First question, why did Amenity break up?

MIKE: Um, I think I'm the one that instigated it really. I said I kind of wasn't into it anymore. We've been around for a long time and for me like I just felt like I wanted to, I don't know, I just felt like what we could do,



we'd done it kind of. I don't know, for me it just didn't seem like it was moving in any direction. I felt like we had kind of done a lot and at the same time we kinda hadn't done a lot. I don't know it just kind of came like that. It's kind of hard to explain why I decided, but pretty much I just felt like I needed to do something fresh, and also I just felt like it lost... I just felt like something wasn't totally there for me.

KENT: Was any of that in relation to the tour?

MIKE: Well kinda. Tour. We did the tour and stuff and there were some cool shows, but for the most part the tour kind of bummed me out in a way. Maybe it was just the shows or whatever. It wasn't really being with everyone because I totally like everyone. It wasn't like some conflict where I didn't get along with someone. I just didn't feel like, when we were doing it, that I was fully being satisfied. I didn't feel like it was creative enough for me. I didn't feel like I had enough play in the creative process. Just singing and not being able to play guitar. I only wrote music for one song, and Tim wrote all the other music. So it was just kind of that, but the tour might of had something to do with it.

KENT: How did the tour go?

MIKE: I didn't think the tour... I mean in some ways it... the cool part about the tour wasn't actually the shows, like for me. The cool parts of the tour was just hanging out with everyone, just getting to go around and meet people from all over the country, but the shows for me really weren't the best part. Just like some of the shows in the mid-west and south were we were playing a really big club that could hold three or four hundred people and there is like fifteen kids there, or like one show we played there was the other band and our two roadies and the kid that put on the shows and the kid that put on the shows friend. So we're playing to eight people in a big club. It's just like stuff like that. I think about playing an instrument or something, like drums or guitar, it would be easier, but with singing it kind of takes it's toll.

KENT: You had a lot of trouble with shows falling through?

MIKE: Yeah, we had actually about seven or eight shows fall through. The tour was set up like two or three weeks before we went. So some of the shows didn't even get set up until we were on the road. Like the show we had at the Anthrax we got on it like three days before.

KENT: On a different topic, I guess you spent some time in Europe?

MIKE: Yeah, I spent about a month right before tour. Actually I came home four days before the tour. Yeah, I spent a month in Europe just back packing, just cruising around. I didn't really have a planned out route. I just kind of went wherever. That was really cool, just to get to meet a lot

of people from outside the U.S., for me that was probably one of the most awakening experiences. I've always considered myself like more alternative to the status quo and America and like that whole line of thinking, but it was kind of weird going there because in some ways I realized how much more I guess American I was then I really realized. Like there is a lot of stuff that you don't even know until you get to go there and get a chance to really see yourself. So for me it had a really big effect on me just looking at myself and just kind of looking at the world. That was kind of weird.

KENT: Did you see any punk rock while you were there?

MIKE: I didn't go to any shows, but I got into record stores and met kids in record stores and that kind of stuff, but I didn't happen to fall in any place where there was a show. But through doing Down and stuff we've gotten a lot of responses from Europe, so I guess I just know a lot of kids that way, but going there made their letters seem a lot different, like maybe made me understand it more.

KENT: I was reading some interview where you were talking a lot about revolutionary consciousness, where exactly are you with that?

MIKE: Like where am I kind of out with revolution? A lot of my thinking on the whole revolution thing mainly to me comes out of the idea of economics and kind of into the idea that America has been an economic conspiracy, like from the beginning. Like even a lot of the ideas and ideologies that American people walk around believing and stuff like that are not really what's going on. That there is a lot more economic shaping of a lot of things we live under like racism and just everything in our society. It's just more economic. So to me the whole thing is just this, if we are looking at hardcore or the music scene as an alternative and we're talking about change or asking about change and all this stuff, how can we



San Diego, 1989, photo McClard



ask for these changes in a system that's inept to provide for them, and really in a system that's structured for a lot of these problems to happen. So my whole thing is that if we take a look at the economic structure, without getting into this whole long dogma of whatever of the whole economic thing, you look at it and you see how it is structured and you see that a lot of the problems are coming from an economic basis, than for me if you're even going to talk about change then you've got to be talking about revolution, you've got to be talking about serious change because in the system that we are in now we're not going to be able to reconcile any of these problems. So a lot of it just came out of an economic thing.

KENT: Did you get a lot of this just being in Europe?

MIKE: Yeah, well a lot of it was just because I was reading a lot of books and hanging out with different people, and like up at my college and stuff, and taking a lot of different classes. I was just getting exposed just a little bit here and there, and then I started getting really interested and reading a lot of books, and then going to Europe just fully opened my eyes to a lot of stuff. What Europe really open my eyes to was the fact that like, I guess saying to me not like Europe was some utopia or everything was perfect because they have a lot of problems going on there, but to me meeting people there they seemed so much more educated about what was going on, or so much more aware of it rather than in America where we live under such an idea where we're in the greatest place in the world and that this is utopia, and people walk around believing this. Going to Europe it seemed like there was just a lot more facts around and people seemed to a larger degree to care a lot more, and maybe that's because stuff over there is a lot more urgent. A lot of times over here there aren't a lot of reasons for most of America to be angry, I mean even though there is there isn't really anything crucial. There's not a war and they still have their t.v.s and there kind of happy. But over there it just seemed like people cared a lot more about what was going on.

KENT: From going to Europe what kinds of things need to change in America?

MIKE: In America? Besides everything?

KENT: Or is it everything?

MIKE: I think America does need to change. I don't think America can last forever like it is. I mean, I think America is going to have to change, and it can either be positive or things could get work.

KENT: On that, do you think that "democracy" works?

MIKE: Not totally. It doesn't work for everyone. Since the earliest forms of democracy it hasn't worked for everyone. I'm not sure if there is anything that works for everyone. But the one thing being in the Netherlands, the idea that was so coll that was being expressed a lot in the government was tolerance. Europe is pretty vast. Just the idea of tolerance. The whole idea is more towards let people do what they want

to do and give people room to do it as long as they don't totally hurt someone else. Where here that's the ideal, but in reality how free are we.

KENT: For me I think the whole thing with democracy is that as long as there is economic imbalance then it won't work.

MIKE: Yeah, that's the thing with America too. We have all this law and legislation that says all this really good stuff, but none of them take in account the economic variable. So yeah like everyone gets a free chance, but someone is getting a lot more of the pie than someone else. America totally misses the whole economic point.

KENT: Do you think that punk rock in the U.S. is valid in terms of being an outcry or as a different type of consciousness?

MIKE: I don't know. I think it was, I mean I think there have been bands and people that have been pissed, but overall I don't know. Like to me the thing is this, with a lot of hardcore and punk, a lot of it is angry and it has a lot of emotion in it, but sometimes I almost wonder where it is directed at, like where is it headed. Like I think right now, where is hardcore going to go, I mean for however long it has been around how far have people taken it, and even how far have I taken it? How far have any of these ideas transformed to make an actual threat? Or to make some actual action come about. I guess not to sound too negative, there have been a lot of cool compilations, and a lot of cool benefits shows that have gone on. I'm sure those have had their effects, but overall I just wonder where it is going?

KENT: Do you see yourself doing more musical stuff along the lines of hardcore, or other genres?

MIKE: I don't know. Like where I see myself going now is that I really want to take music and ideas to like a different level, like to somewhere they haven't... to kinda keep it moving because like right now I kinda feel that a lot of stuff is getting stale. There's not that much stuff coming out that's fresh and urgent. I just want to do something that's like urgent and that can be heard. I don't just want to do a dent that just kind of blends in with the damage. I just want something really urgent. I'm not sure what that is, I mean I'm not even sure what I want to do. I mean I know what I want to do, but I don't know how it is going to come about or who I'm going to do it with and stuff like that.

KENT: There was a time when San Diego didn't have much of a scene, do you think that Amenity played a large part in bringing that back to San Diego?

MIKE: Yeah just in the sense that we put on a lot of shows, and we were the only hardcore band that really stayed around for any length of time, and we played a lot of shows and did a lot of stuff. So I kind of feel like, yeah, a lot of that came from Amenity. The whole reputation of punk and hardcore for San Diego like five years back was just like a total violent scene. There were bands that wouldn't come play here because of that. Amenity just kind of stood out and did something different. We kind of built our own scene, whereas in the last year it has become its own thing. There's kind of a whole scene more based towards that direction of things.

KENT: What were your feelings on the last show you played in terms of the venue and the problems that there were?

MIKE: As far as playing the place for me, I wasn't really stoked on where it was at, as far as the bouncers and the whole attitude of the show, I mean like the guy who put on the show, Dan Diegan, I think he did a rad job because it was like five bands six dollars, it was like a pretty big place, and a lot of people came, but still for me there was just something not there. Especially when we started the first song and I jumped off the stage or whatever and the bouncer started kicking me in the ribs because I jumped off the stage. After that first song I was like "Man, this isn't hardcore like we used to play." Like actually that's probably only maybe the second show we ever played with bouncers, like even been in that situation, and that's probably one of the biggest shows that's happened in San Diego in a long time, some of that was that it was our last show and a lot of old friends came out. So in a sense I felt like "God a lot of people came out to see our show," in a sense that was really cool, like "God this is a lot different than in the old days," but then in another sense it was like "Man, something is really lost here, something is really lost." You know what I mean? Just the whole barriers and the bouncers and just the violence level and stuff like that. It was like "Fuck, this isn't hardcore like we used to do it. This isn't how we used to be." So that kind of bummed me out in a way that that was

our last show, but in another way it kind of showed me more where I want to go, which isn't towards the bouncers and all that shit.

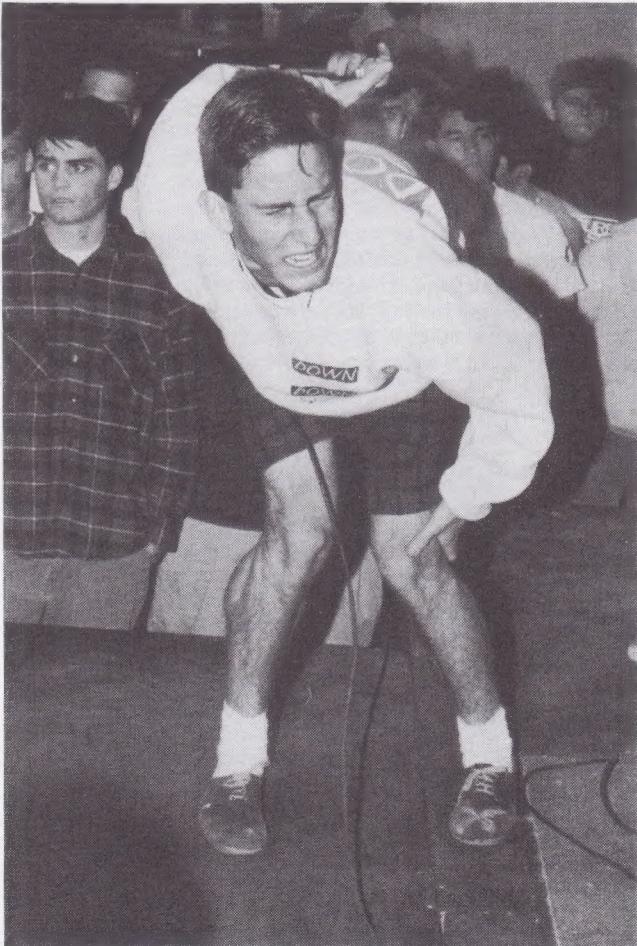
KENT: There's always that big controversy between people that are trying to reach a larger audience and then other people saying that punk rock doesn't belong in that kind of large format, what are your opinions on that whole argument?

MIKE: I feel weird, I feel kind of torn between those two. A lot of times I feel like if I want to have a large effect, I mean if you want to reach a lot of people then you need to get your records out to a lot of people, but even then it kind of goes back and forth. I mean there are a few rap groups like Public Enemy who say a lot of stuff and reach a lot of people and probably effect a lot of people's lives, and you know what other bands you want to pull out of the hat like U2 or whatever, even though to me some of those bands like on a larger level I just don't really feel...

KENT: But are those bands really effective?

MIKE: Well it's weird. I'm sure they've affected some people's lives. I'm sure to someone that has been a real and intimate experience, and in the same way I wonder if there is any difference because even in hardcore so many people are saying stuff but a lot of times I go to shows the main thing is who is down with who and the gossip and who is wearing what and who has the cool long sleeve. It's like a lot of times I go to hardcore shows and there is more emphasis being put upon all this trivial stuff that I'm trying to escape, that there is more emphasis being put on that then what's being said. Or sometimes some band will be playing and they will be saying stuff and I wonder sometimes when I'm up there talking who's listening, or is anyone listening? Does anyone really care? Does anybody hear what I'm saying? So the hardcore ideal of do it yourself I'm fully into that, but the reality of it, like right now in 1990, I just don't know what's so urgent. I mean I think there is some urgent stuff out there. I'm not just saying there is nothing and hardcore is lost or whatever. I think there's some stuff out there that's still urgent and pressing. So as far as band being heard by more people and stuff, for me in some ways there are bands that are on large labels that I'm into, and I think they're rad, and I listen to them. There's a lot of hardcore stuff that I listen to. But for me in a way where I'm at right now, music is music. It's notes, and like the only thing separating the music is the attitudes behind it. So I don't know. I'm into playing all kinds of stuff. There's a lot of music that I'm really into. I'm really into

jazz, like old jazz and stuff, and I'm into their attitudes and stuff. They were totally doing fresh stuff, and being new and inventive, and taking stuff where it hasn't been before. So I'm into that, and so to me I just kind of want to make music, and I just want to say something, and I want to just try to express whatever is going on in my life or the world or whatever, and just make it and put it out for people and stay as much away from the whole politics of the whole label thing as I can. And if you want to call that hardcore, then I'm hardcore. Some other people call it something else. So for me I don't want to say like large labels are... even though as soon as you get on a large label you're dealing with who's putting your record out, and you're dealing with their personal politics. You know, like can you be on that label and still stay what you want to say and still not feel like a total hypocrite, but even



UCSB Old Gym, 3/10/90, photo Skindrud

then how far do you want to take it? Even hardcore, we're still plugged into the electricity lines of G&E. It's almost impossible to escape in some way feeling like a hypocrite. We're still getting our records pressed up at some plant that's owned by some major. In some ways it's hard to escape. I just want to make music and I want to keep my own motives pure, and keep my own direction of where I'm going focused. Even hardcore it kind of bums me out with all the competition between the bands and labels. L.A. seems like a giant rat race. Fuck, that's not hardcore.

KENT: My last question, I personally don't believe this [the draft, not war] will happen, but if the U.S. goes to war in January and the draft is reinstated what does Mike D. do?

MIKE: Don't go. I didn't even register. I got a letter the other day that said I have to register. Fuck that, man. I'm not going to fight for this country. No way.

KENT: I think a lot of people and bands in the hardcore scene would support what is going on in the Mid-East just like a lot of hardcore bands supported what went on when we invaded Panama, which was a pretty fucked up situation.

MIKE: Totally fucked up. Being in Europe with some of this stuff. They're like "how can you let your government do this stuff in Central America?" I'm like "fuck." I thought about it... Fuck. To most of the world we're pretty tweaked.

KENT: Did you find that a lot of people have a lot of anti-U.S. sentiment?
MIKE: Yeah, the thing was like. I remember my mom saying that the whole world wants to be like America and blah blah, and I wasn't really into that whole trip, but the only thing I see being imitated is like the whole material aspect, like the McDonalds, and even then most people aren't stoked on that. So yeah I found a lot of people who were really disgusted with America, and disgusted with how we handle our world policies... What do you think about hardcore not being that urgent?

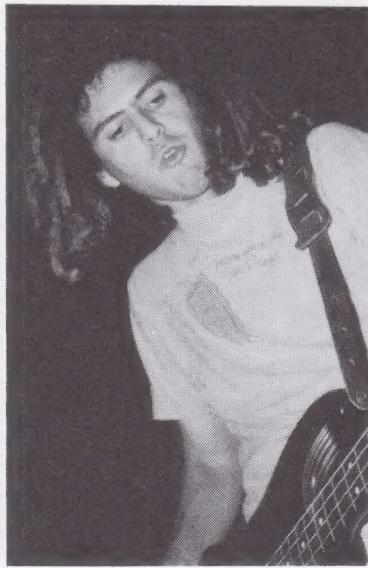
KENT: I think it definitely is not that urgent, but it can be. I think the thing about anything is that I don't know if anything in America is urgent. I don't think there is anything, at least in Southern California, that is that pressing and effective. I think for hardcore the only thing anyone can ever do is just make it effective for themselves. If hardcore is bad it's because we let it get bad. You just have to keep fighting to make it whatever you want it to be. There is nothing in this world that is so great. A lot of people have been disillusioned with hardcore, but if you ask me in a lot of ways it has gotten better than it was eight years ago. It's a lot more serious. And the only reason people get disillusioned is because they have these fantasies built up about it. It never was some utopian society, utopian subculture. There's never been a utopian subculture and there probably never will be. I'm totally into hardcore. It's my way of life. But that doesn't mean that I'm always going to go to hardcore shows necessarily. I think hardcore is more an attitude than anything else, and it is just trying to find a way to live your life without... at the best minimizing the negative effects you have on society and the world. I think hardcore needs to get more political again. I really wish the straight edge scene would... I don't know, it is weird because there are a lot of political bands out there, but a lot of them pay lip service and it is more like a generic form in itself. It isn't effective. It's like "here's our song about war, pass me another 40 oucer." So I really wish that more people could realize... In a weird way I kind of hope something happens in the Mid-East. It would wake people up. It would certainly fuck with everything.

MIKE: The world is in a weird space. I just think something needs to happen that's pissed. When Inside Out first came around they were pissed. How fucking pissed were they?!? I just don't know who is pissed anymore.



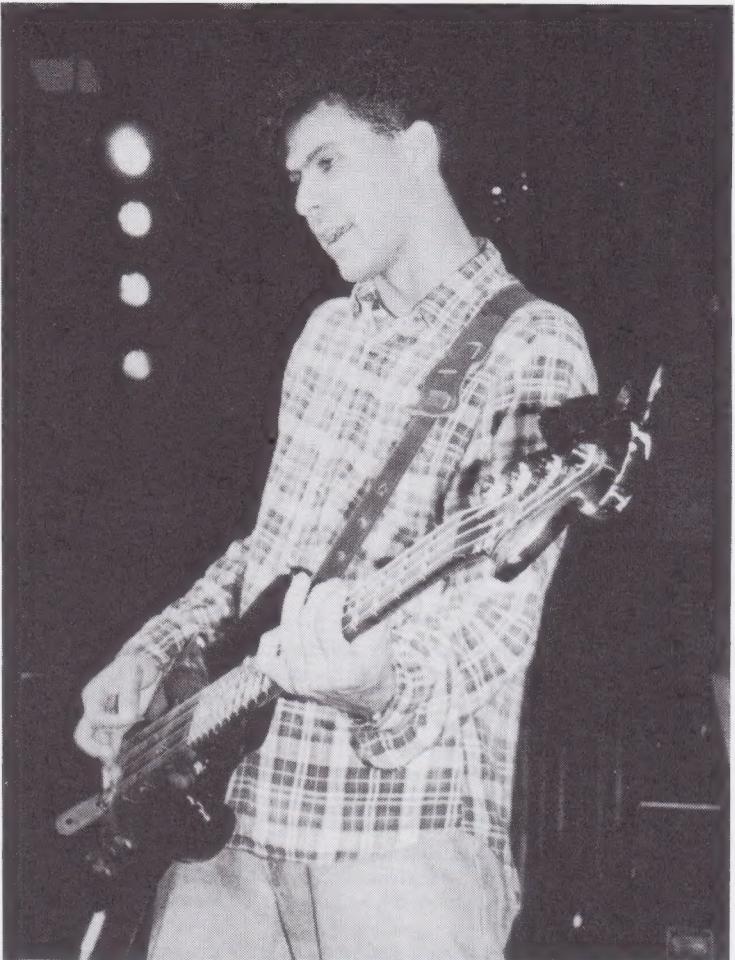
KENT: Why is Amenity breaking up according to you?

SERGIO: Well pretty much everyone in the band kinda wants to do different things, you know what I mean. And we kind of feel that right now Amenity, not that we've done all that we can do, but that we're at a standstill almost. And so we figure that it's time to split up and do different things.



UCSB Old Gym, 3/10/90, photo McClard

The Backdoor, 11/30/90, photo McClard



Mike wants to do different things with Inside Out now, and Barry and I wanted to kind of do something different, but actually now we're going to be starting a new band with Tim. Tim, Barry, and I... Changing the name, getting a new singer. So hopefully we should be out with something next year.

KENT: Different lines of music?

SERGIO: Yeah, we got a different singer. He's not really into hardcore. So it's going to be a really different format. He sings for a rap band. So it will be different from what other people would expect, and it will bring a different crowd to shows, and I think it will do some good for the music.

KENT: My other big question, I guess you played bass on the Vegan Reich 7". What's the story with that? How did you hook up with that?

SERGIO: Well I met Sean at a show about a year ago, and I just kept in contact with him, and he asked me if I wanted to record on the record. So I went up to his house and learned the songs and recorded, and I know he has the reputation of being really fascist about his beliefs and things like that, and I might not agree with some of the techniques he brings about getting there. I'm vegan myself, but I don't want to impose it on other people by saying "either vegan or death" or whatever. And I know he's been slagged on about issues like homosexuality or what have you. Each person in the band, each person in the world is an individual no matter what. So you can't stereotype everyone by that.

KENT: I was mostly curious what you thought about his stance on



homosexuality and his stance on abortion.

SERGIO: Well I've had some real talks with Sean about that stuff, and basically the thing about homosexuality is that in the process of nature and stuff, it basically isn't natural. Sexual intercourse, one of the major functions of it is reproduction, and I'm not saying that everything that homosexuals do is faulty, but I believe that is true in a way. That (homosexuality) doesn't make any sense biologically.

KENT: But heterosexual sex doesn't always reproduce either.

SERGIO: I know, but that's kind of God's way of birth control. It's kind of like he gives you that leeway because if it was a sure thing that you were

going to have an offspring every single time then this world would be overpopulated. So it's kind of like the natural birth control.

KENT: It seems weird because Vegan Reich doesn't seem to come off with any kind of religious overtones. Obviously the human race is not in danger of extinction from lack of offspring.

SERGIO: The whole thing is that Sean's way of looking at religion... He comes from more of a man is part of nature, nature is part of man. You're in the spider web of life, and you have to kind of keep that balance of nature. Maybe not believe in some kind of spiritual god, but more like it's in you, it's in yourself, and you have to kind of have to work through that spider web and keep it all together.

KENT: Animals also exhibit homosexual overtones, rats, any kind of animal isolated with its own sex will become homosexual.

SERGIO: A lot of people say that is more like for dominant reasons. Like the male animals always want to have a dominant power trip so they force it on other animals, other male animals. *{This assumes male dominance in animals, when in reality female animals often dominate in the animal kingdom. - Kent}* So that's how you might want to reason through it in nature and stuff like that. Where as for man, even with heterosexual sex, everything has gotten so perverted whether it be in the media or whatever. But if a person has grown up all his life having these feelings then how can you say that is wrong? I can't tell someone that he is wrong for having these feelings.

KENT: His point of view... to say that homosexuality is destroying the world and that meat eaters are the downfall of society... I find it all very absurd.

SERGIO: I don't know, you might want to interview him about that, I don't want to get too involved or become too much a part of it.

KENT: I was just kind of curious. How familiar were you with their ideas when you did the 7"?

SERGIO: I didn't know any of their lyrics or anything. He was just a friend of mine. So I was just like "why not? I'll play bass." He asked me if I wanted to do another 7", and I agreed to do that. Sean's a friend. I believe different things, he has different beliefs, you can't hold everyone accountable for his beliefs just because they hang out with him. I think he

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wants to play a couple of shows. I'm just going to take it day by day.

KENT: What about the abortion issue? How do you feel about that?

SERGIO: Yeah, he is really anti-abortion. He actually sent me a letter the other day that he was sending to Walter Glazier... Martin Sprouse, I think it was directed to Martin Sprouse, but it was kind of a thing where it was saying how can you be pro-choice? It's almost like a cop-out. And I kind of believe it, too. It's like the guy saying "well it's not my problem, why don't you decide for yourself." It's kind of a cop-out for the guy. I know in this society that that happens and a lot of guys are totally irresponsible and it's almost acceptable for the guy to take off and leave the woman with the choice. It's totally screwed up. I think it has to get back to the guys, come on dude, get your responsibilities straight, get your act together. Pretty much anti.

KENT: But how would you stand on the passing of laws against it?

SERGIO: I think for me, on passing laws, the least laws the better. It's ridiculous to try to force anything on someone. Negative reinforcement doesn't work. We're trying but it's not working. I think a lot of it needs to get to the root of the problem not after. Whether it be more education when you're younger, or birth control or whatever, if that's what you're going to be doing. If that's what it takes then that's what it takes.

KENT: On a completely different topic, are you fairly religious?

SERGIO: Yeah, I pretty much go to a Catholic church, I'm pretty much into that. I take a lot from a lot of other religions. I like to read from other religions as well. I believe that there is a higher, a supreme being out there. Whether it be... I'm not saying it's going to be Krishna, or Jah, or God, or Jesus, or whatever, but I think it helps me out. Reading stories in the Bible or whatever. Every kind of bible, whether it be the Christian Bible, the Bhagavad-gita, or whatever, the Rastafarian religion. There's good thing from everything like that. There is just different techniques to go about it.

KENT: Being that... would you call yourself a Catholic then?

SERGIO: I don't think I would call myself a Catholic, I'm not really devoted to that kind of thing.

KENT: My question would be how would you feel about the whole idea of the judgmental god somehow condemning people?

SERGIO: I kind of believe that when Catholicism started or in the beginning branches it was kind of to keep people under some kind of order

and restraint, and to say that god is going to punish you was just to keep people in their place. But I believe, not everyone is perfect, I don't think that, and I don't believe "go ahead, do whatever you want to do." I think that's kind of a selfish act in itself. You're kind of thinking of yourself. It's really selfish. So I believe that no one is perfect, and they should try to improve themselves in a way, but no one should call themselves perfect.

KENT: So you don't think there is some being up there keeping tabs on us, and giving judgement?

SERGIO: No, I think if you know that... you feel it deep down inside that you've done something wrong or whatever then you kind of feel it inside yourself.

KENT: Going back to homosexuality, do you think that homosexuality is a sin in God's eyes? *{Which assumes that one believes in a god.}*

SERGIO: A sin in God's eyes? I wouldn't say it is a sin because it's a person's feelings. You can't repress those feelings, whether it be towards the male or the female. But you know, I'm not so sure if I'd really be into like the pervertedness of everything.. of the way everyone partakes of sexual intercourse, whether it be heterosexual, homosexual, or bi-sexual, or whatever. It's just become so exploited in the media. Everything loses its meaning. I'm not really into that polygamy. The everyone get together... I think that's way off.

KENT: Why be vegan?

SERGIO: A lot of it health reasons, a lot of it moral reasons. There are so many reasons to become a vegan, vegetarian in general. The whole dairy industry is so corrupted. The way they treat the animals and stuff like that and pump millions of dollars into this stuff. And just what it does to your body. We're not made to drink other animal's milk. Other animals don't drink other animal's milk. You don't see a giraffe drinking off a dog or whatever. So why should we? It doesn't make any sense.



I T Y

KENT: Well, my first question is how come Amenity broke up?

TIM: Umm, well I guess, not to say anything bad about Mike, but I guess Mike could answer that best because mostly Mike wanted to, and we went along with that because there is no sense in us staying together if one person doesn't want to. Mike just wanted to do different things, so we agreed on it. We have no hard feelings about it.

KENT: Mike said Amenity had run its course, do you agree with that?

TIM: Well that's hard to say, maybe for Mike it had, but as far as the rest of us go, the three of us—Sergio, Barry, and I—are still playing together with a different singer, under a different name now, which is unnamed as of now, but to us, we still wanted to keep going. I think a lot of it had to do with Mike being in Inside Out, and here we were in Amenity for three years struggling to get things done and tour, and then he ends up in a band which Revelation is putting out their single and they're paying for recording and they'll pay for touring, and I kind of think that he sees that like "Wow, that sure came easy," while it took us so long to get this far.

KENT: Why do you think that it took Amenity so long to get established?

TIM: A lot of it had to do with basically us being from San Diego. When the scene started changing, I guess, in about '86, before that there weren't too many local bands, there was like Battalion Of Saints, there was Diatribe and a few others, and as far as shows there was a lot of violence and people just went to slam, and the shows were really big and they were always at least \$10, and things started changing when we started playing and found out about Neighborhood Watch, we both started about the same time, and we started doing shows in the area. The scene kind of started changing at about that time because it brought a lot of people into the scene that weren't just interested in slamming, maybe they weren't people who were totally interested in politics and social issues, but they were into more than just fighting and slamming. It just took a long time for San Diego to come that far. Shows then were like forty people in a back yard or a garage or something, and that was kind of an alternative to the other hardcore scene which had hundreds of people paying \$10 for a show, which still

goes on. Most of those people didn't even come to our shows, and then at our last show at San Diego State it was sold out, and there were a lot of people there. We've basically come that far.

KENT: What did you think of that show?

TIM: I thought it was kind of ironic that here we are the three of us—Sergio, Barry and I—started out, Sergio and I couldn't play, we couldn't tune our guitars, Barry didn't have drums, but we wanted to make a band. We practiced in my bedroom, and eventually Barry got a drum set, we came that far and it is kind of ironic that our last show was like such a big professional show, you know, it had tickets available at ticket outlets, and the tickets said "straight edge concert," and, you know, it had man-eating bouncers, and a dressing room, and things like that. It was really kind of strange, but it was a fun show because there were a lot of people there that were into the show, but just the bouncers, and all the professionalism of it kind of ruined it, especially after they jumped on Mike.

KENT: You mentioned punk rock being more than just slamming, where do you think that Amenity fit, in terms of the straight edge and political scene?

TIM: It's kind of hard to figure out, because early on when we first started straight edge bands weren't really quite as big as they got in the last couple years. Most people just heard of us because we were a straight edge band, so that's how our name got out, but I guess we didn't quite have the same lyrics, and we didn't quite fit the physical description—Sergio had dread locks, I had long hair—we didn't quite fit the description. So a lot of straight edge people were kind of confused about it, and other bands we got to know like Cringer and Neighborhood Watch, bands like that weren't straight edge bands, and they got to know us, and their followers knew us, and we all kind of hung out together, we all played the same shows. So I don't know. We were somewhere in the middle there. A lot of straight edge people were confused by it. I still haven't figured out where we did fit in, but we were all definitely and still are straight, but we all have our own political views, and it all kind of mixed together. I think most people once they got to know us just took us as just people, and for what we are about individually.

KENT: How would you explain what the new band is going to be like?

TIM: I guess there will be a lot of similarities to Amenity. Music-wise, if it sounds any different it will just be kind of a natural progression. These songs would have been Amenity songs probably if Amenity was still together. So musically it won't be that different. Vocal-wise, you know it will be a different singer, so of course it will sound different. Darrell, who will be singing with us, he was in a rap group, and he sang "This Is Our Struggle" at the last show. We're not going to be a rap group. He doesn't want to rap. I'm sure there will be little parts, that influence will always be there, but Darrell kind of... he got into the music through friends who were into straight edge bands, and it impressed him, and he started going to shows and he was really interested, and when he found out that bands were singing about racism and different rights of people, that really interested him, and he had always wanted to do something to actually show it from a Black person's point of view because it usually comes from a white person's perspective, which is good but it still isn't quite exactly the same.

KENT: We're you happy with the tour?

TIM: Yeah, I was really happy. I had never been able to leave San Diego much before. You know I've lived here twenty years of my twenty-five years of life. I had been to San Francisco a few times, and I had been up to Oregon, Washington and Canada, but this was a whole other experience to me to just travel around and meet all these different people. It was real strange to go into a town where people knew who we were and had our single and everything, and who knew our songs. It was really strange. We learned a lot from it, you know, we had a lot of days with no showers, twenty hour drives, sleeping in the van, real humid weather, and those were the best times. Those are the times we end up talking about the most... "Yeah, remember in Kentucky we were laying out on the sidewalk and the club owner didn't show up, and we're walking around looking for a place to bathe." It was a great experience, we all had fun... things could have been better, but things could have been worse. Our roadies loved it too.

KENT: Did Mike write most of the lyrics?

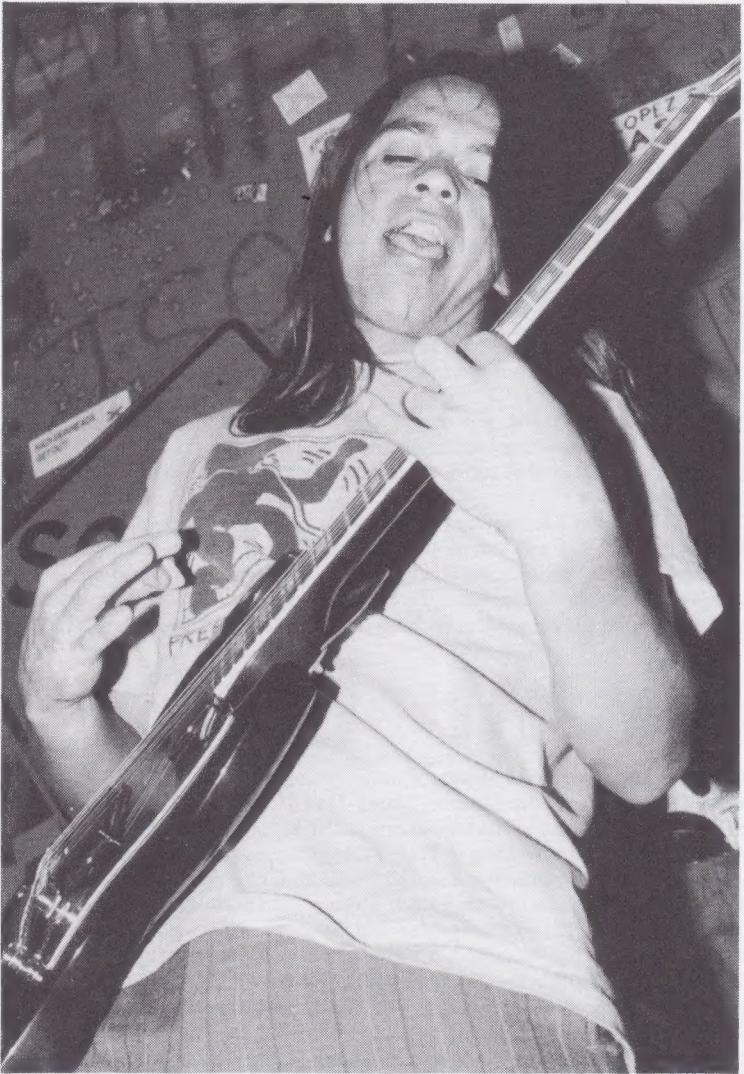
TIM: Yeah, Mike wrote the lyrics, but now Darrell will be writing them so lyric-wise it will be a lot different.

KENT: What kind of topics do the new songs cover?

TIM: I know one song he has been talking about is stereotyping in the sense that he gets a lot of stereotypes being black, but at the same time he can't deny that he doesn't do the same thing, that all of us do to some extent. I kind of think the lyrics will be a little more... Mike's lyrics dealt with social things in kind of a vague way, and I think Darrell's will be a little less vague and in some ways more political.

KENT: You were pretty involved with Vinyl Communications when it was a store, what was the whole deal with all of that?

TIM: Well, Bob (Vinyl Communications) had so many records at his house because of putting out his own records and trading them with other labels that he thought of opening a record store so he would have some way of getting rid of all these records. People would just come by his house and buy them. It was kind of a joke at first, but we just thought about it and then I and three other people each put in \$100 and then we did some fund raising and Bob put in some of his own money and money from the label, and a



Gilman Street, 8/12/89, photo McClard

lot of people were excited about it. We raised money at shows and sold stuff at swaps meets, and then we found a building and actually did it. It lasted for a year. We were six months in one location and six months in another. It went over well. There were a lot of problems with sales. A lot of kids would buy independent records, they were all into trading, and buying and re-selling and I think they kind of got competitive, like "Gee, I bought the new 7" first," or "Oh yeah, well so-and-so's album came out and I want to get it before anyone else." So a lot of people wouldn't wait, and they would immediately go to another record store if a record came out a day before we got it in.

KENT: The store was more of a co-optive wasn't it?

TIM: Yeah, it was co-optive, but a lot of people that would hang out there, spend like days there... we had a ping-pong table, and they would be hanging out all the time, but if another store got a record, even though we were going to get it the next day they would buy it kind of so they could say "Yeah, I already got that." And they didn't seem to realize that if they didn't put their support into it then it wasn't going to stay open. A lot of people just kind of took it for granted. I think if we hadn't been in such a small town that we could have pulled it off. Chula Vista is kind of a lot of retired older people, there are a lot of kids, but I think if we were more in downtown San Diego then it would have lasted longer, but the main thing was to do it for Chula Vista, and not just to have a store.

KENT: It seems like it was a little ahead of its time.

TIM: Yeah, it was. We had shows in there, we had Soul Side, Crimpshrine, all the local bands, the Hated played there. It was amazing how many people had heard about it. We also put on a lot of garage shows.

KENT: We're all the garage shows at DelMar's?

TIM: At first they would happen at Bob's house in his backyard studio, and then we started having them in a park, and then other people liked the idea and started asking mom and dad if they could have one in their backyard. So there were a lot of backyard shows. We had a garage where we would do local shows, and then when out of town bands would come we would have them at DelMar's house. They went over well. We had Judge, Verbal Assault, and Soul Side again, Bold and all kinds of different bands played there. I was amazed when Pete (Verbal Assault) called me up and said "Yeah, I got your number from Bobby in Soul Side, and I hear you do shows?" I was amazed that this guy was calling me all the way from Rhode Island to book a show in a little tiny garage. The word really got around. We could have done a lot more shows, but we didn't want to push it to where the neighbors or police would complain.

KENT: Is there anything like that now, that's kind of like more underground?

TIM: Well, there haven't been too many shows at DelMar's in a long time. There's been some free shows at this place called the Triton, and there's the Backdoor. George who puts out the Daily Impulse, he finds houses, warehouses and other places to do shows. The Amenity show at the Backdoor is the biggest show to happen in a couple years, as far as alternative shows go. Bands can play down in Tijuana at this place called Iguana's, which is a big miniature arena type thing. A lot of bigger bands like 7 Seconds, Rollins Band, Bad Brains, Megadeath, Faith No More... those kind of bands play there for like \$15. It's funny because not to many people in Mexico can afford to go to the shows. It's all San Diego people.

KENT: I asked Mike this question¹ too. I heard that you guys were somewhat involved in the protest against the "light up the border" thing?

TIM: No, I wouldn't say... Bob is really into that. I mean we all, I guess, have our opinions about the border. I grew up right here. Being Mexican I've been stopped a lot, I guess since I've gotten older I don't get stopped, but years ago I used to always get stopped by the border patrol and be asked for I.D. and things like that. I live right next to a freeway and the migrants walk up next to the freeway, so when I was little I always knew about them. I would go play out in the canyons and they were always around and they were never any harm to me, so I kind of never took offense to them like a lot of people—mostly retired navy people around here do. A lot of people get kind of hysterical about it. It is a very weird situation, I guess more so if you're not used to it. I mean, I'm used to seeing them all the time and saying hi to them and having them ask where they can catch the bus and stuff like that. It's a pretty everyday thing here.

KENT: Why do you think that people are so resentful towards it?

TIM: The thing that always seems to come to people's minds is that they are taking our jobs, but I don't know anyone that goes "Yeah, I want to get a job at a tomato field." So that seems to be the main thing. There are some people that just don't like Mexicans.

KENT: Do you think because of that that the animosity towards Hispanics and Mexicans in that area is worse than in other places?

TIM: Yeah, I think so just because there is more tension, just because there are so many more Mexicans. If you go into a town like San Francisco you still see Mexicans, but the people I don't think have the same attitude towards them as a lot of people do around here just because they aren't around them as much and they're not confronted with having to deal with it. There are a lot of people that say "I don't have any problem with Black people, I love them," and they don't live around them and then when they live with them they kind of think inside "Wow, do I have any prejudice against these people?" They kind of have to face those things. I think that's what makes it harder for people to get along with other people. When you look at them from far away you think everything is cool, but a lot of people are prejudice but they just don't know it and they haven't had to face up to it.

KENT: What do you think we should do about the whole migrant question, or is there anything that can be done?

TIM: To me, it's naive to say it because it will never happen, but I think they should just open up the border. Everyone says there will be a rush with so many people, but I don't think so. A lot of people grew up there and they don't want to leave Mexico. They might come up for jobs and then go back, and then again people will say they are taking jobs and money from our economy, but at the same time if they put money into their economy then we're more likely to get something out of their economy. I mean, as of now at least Tijuana, the main thing their economy produces for citizens up here is bars and discos, and things like that. That's another whole issue

as well, just how many kids are down there just hanging out at a bar and they're 18 and they're thinking "Hey, I've really got it made now." And there are problems with drunken sailor and fights and prostitution, the whole mess. It is something that... when other people come from another country they always ask if they can go see Mexico, and they all end up at Bob Vinyl Communications' house and he takes 'em down and they come back "Oh, like I hate it. I don't want to go back there." It's such a shame to see what is being done to the people down there. All they have to show for themselves is one of the world's largest discos and a whole street full of bars. A few years ago Solucion Mortal used to play up here and there were people that would sneak across from Mexico to watch them play, and some of them when they started Ditchy Dolitare (spelling?) with the singer of Diatribe, and again the ones in the band that lived in Mexico would have to sneak up. They didn't have visas. They would sneak up for shows. There were a few good bands from Mexico. Right now I really don't know what is going on. It's kind of weird because we're so close but there is limited communication. Most of the bands lean more towards speed metal then actual hardcore, although they are all very do-it-yourself because that's the only way you can do it in Mexico.

KENT: Well, I think that's about it.

TIM: I was kind of hoping you might ask me about the Hare Krishnas.

KENT: Go ahead, what do you think about the Hare Krishna thing?

TIM: Well the reason I want to mention it is because a lot of people on the tour were asking us "Hey, are you Krishnas?" and I was like "No, no, we're not Krishnas," and they're like "Oh yeah, because I always see you guys in the Enquirer." The reason we got in the Enquirer is just from knowing Vic. It is really shocking how many kids thought that we were Krishna and how many of those kids were really into Hare Krishna. I've always felt that I was pretty responsible, kind of being a role model for some of the younger kids around here. I don't think they should look up to me in any way, but I always thought that if I did something then a lot of younger kids here who are impressionable might think "Well, yeah he does that! It's cool!" So it really worries me when a lot of kids said they saw us in there and they were really into it. For me personally, I'm totally against it. They come off as nice people. They put on a show in San Diego, but they're after people's money basically. And I think it is a lot more dangerous than a lot of kids think. I've always stayed away from the Temple just because I know, though I don't think it is any danger to me, I know if I started eating at the Temple then I know a lot of younger kids would go "Yeah, Tim goes there it must be cool." And then they would end up going there and eating, and they would end up getting preached to all the time by them, and slowly they would become converted into the whole Krishna thing. And it has happened with a lot of kids with just Shelter's presence in San Diego. A lot of kids were excited, they were like "Yeah, I get to hang out with Ray Cappo!" It is really scary that they did this. I'm not an atheist. I believe in God. I have my own spiritual beliefs, but I just think it is scary how kids can get so caught up in someone else telling them what their spiritual beliefs should be and how to go about it, especially the way they come into hardcore. It's basically just praying on a lot of kids that are looking for something a little solid and they latch on to these values. I just wanted to make it clear that I am in no way down with the Hare Krishnas. I'm more against it now than I have ever been.

KENT: Once Shelter was out of San Diego, did it die down a lot?

TIM: Um, yeah, it did. It kind of left its presence. There were some people who were into it before Shelter. I have a really good friend who is really into it. It worries me that he is into it. He's old enough that I think he can figure things out on his own, but there are a lot of younger kids that just got sucked into it really fast. There was this guy, Jason, from Chicago that moved out here and became a devotee. He started being told things like at an airport tell them you're from a Christian children's organization, tell them it's for homeless people. All of a sudden he realized, "Wow, what am I doing." He found a room filled with sporting goods equipment that they sell, and he is like "What does this have to do with Krishna," and they're like "Well, we have to make money." He took off. He went to a hotel, got police protection, and went back to Chicago. He has all kinds of stories like Kalki from The Razor's Edge 'zine, Jason said he was in his room and he found different books on Adolf Hitler with like different graphics that the Nazis used and he was taking these graphics and that's where he got the idea for the arm band, and remember that page that said like "Revolution and Consciousness?" That was taken out of a Nazi book and he switched the swastikas with Krishna symbols. Supposedly Kalki left the Krishnas.

KENT: My thing on the Krishna movement is that it is so time consuming that I don't see too many people staying with it that long. It is so incredibly time consuming that it takes up your whole life, and the average person doesn't have the will power or self-control to do that for very long.

TIM: Yeah, a lot of people don't stay with it too long. If Ray Cappo didn't get into it then I don't think it would even be mentioned in hardcore, I mean maybe years ago with like Cause For Alarm, but now the Krishnas have listings of hardcore bands and 'zines and everything stored away in their computers. And they're planning this whole thing. Sending certain people to hang out in certain cities. It has died down. It's weird.

KENT: On another topic, what do you think of Hardline and all of that? **TIM:** I don't know, with like Vegan Reich, I don't know Sean very well. I've seen him around. Knowing him the little I do I can't quite tell if he is joking, like in a Mykel Board kind of way, if he is serious about concentration camps then that's totally bullshit and he's completely fucked if he believes things like that, but I don't know. I really haven't ever had a chance to ask him about it. I am a vegan myself, but I don't know I don't get too fanatical. I'm more into it for health reasons. I'm not really that fanatical about animal rights, I kind of think that you have to show people an alternative. If you just tell them get rid of this, don't eat this, don't wear this without showing them an alternative then nothing is going to happen. But yeah, I don't know about the whole Hardline thing. I think it is played up for more than it is.

KENT: What do you think about their whole stance on homosexuality and their stance on abortion?

TIM: I think it is kind of weird. It is almost like... I don't know it almost doesn't seem alternative or hardcore at all. It's just kind of odd. In some ways it reminds me of like the young Republicans. Abortion is an issue that I'm really confused on. I say I am pro-choice but I don't really know what I would do if I got someone pregnant. I could say "Yeah, I'd leave it up to you," but that's kind of a cop out for a male to just say "Oh, it's up to you." I just think it is kind of regressive. I don't know, like I said it just kind of reminds me of a conservative young Republican stance. I don't think those bands are conservative, a lot of them have really left leanings, but if you go too far to the left you meet with the far end of the right.



KENT: Why did, in your mind, why did Amenity break up?

BARRY: Well, kind of Mike, I think. He just seemed like he was kind of getting burned out singing. He really didn't think he could sing that good, I think. So he really didn't want to pursue it, but then after he did the last record he was really happy. That's where I think he finally broke through, where he was really comfortable with his voice. But to tell you the truth Mike is just a really motivated person and he wants to get things going where the rest of Amenity is more laid back. So I think that frustrated him, and plus he is really into playing guitar, so that was kind of it, I think.

KENT: The rest of the band didn't really want to see Amenity go?

BARRY: No, nobody wanted to see it go, but now since we have a new singer it might be more promising, I don't know.

KENT: Have you been practicing with the new singer?

BARRY: We've practiced a few times, but we're kind of back in a rut, we're kind of lagging, we don't have a place to practice right now. We're going to start practicing soon. Our new singer, Darrell, he is really, really motivated and he has a lot of connections and he wants to pursue this, he wants to pursue music as a career, so it's kind of nice because I'm not too stoked on school right now, and I would really like to play music. So he is supposed to get us a place to practice, and we're supposed to get off our butts. We've gotten a lot of offers to play like really big venues. We want to start playing some shows. We will be playing, hopefully, within two months. We've got colleges to play. People said they would put us on whenever we're ready to play. We just have to get material going.

KENT: Do you guys have a lot of material?

BARRY: We have like four different riffs, like one almost complete songs, and the others are close. So as soon as we get six or seven songs... we want to be really, really tight. We want to hit the audience with an impact, you know what I mean? Be really professional sounding, really tight, and loud, and just kind of take it by storm. Instead of being really sloppy, I personally want to be really tight, just blow people away.

KENT: Do you see a lot of differences between what Amenity was and what this new band is?

BARRY: Well, musically I would say... Tim writes all of the riffs and stuff, the other members are kind of background people, but I would say that it will be a little more progressive rock sounding. Well, right now it sounds to me like Bad Brains and Verbal Assault mixed, and I can't complain, I think that's great, but Tim was saying that he wants to go a little more mainstream sounding, which I don't mind doing. We're going to be a little more rocking. I haven't really heard Darrell sing yet, only when he

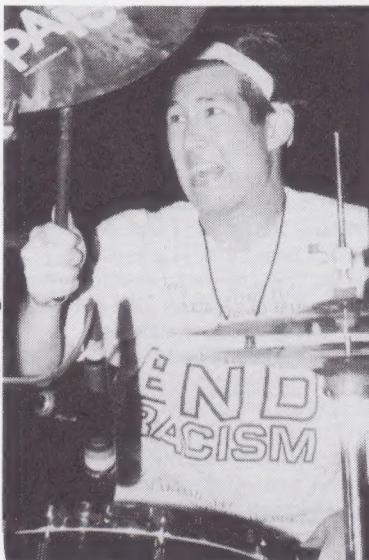
sang on "Our Struggle," but hopefully he'll have a wide range, a vocal range from really screaming to just really cool singing, and maybe some rap or whatever.

KENT: I take it you would like to see this band get a lot bigger than Amenity was?

BARRY: Well, people said that Amenity had a lot of potential, and I think we did, but we were just kind of slow. In a way we were like more than underground in a way because we had been around for so long and we never really played a big L.A. venue or anything. Like Triggerman, they're like really big already, and they're like brand new, but just who's in the band, that makes the band big quick. Or like anything Mahony does is like right away big. They're headlining shows, but it's like their first show. Amenity had the potential, but we didn't get off our butts basically, but I think with Darrell he's going to really do it for us. He'll get us off our butts.

KENT: I guess he sang in a rap band?

BARRY: Yeah, he used to sing in a rap band. Tim always knew that he would want to sing, and then all of a sudden Mike made the date that "Yeah, this is our last show. We've been around for a long time, and it's kind of stale, so let's go our separate ways." So we agreed, and I was going to be in a band with Mike, but that never happened, and then Tim said "Yeah, let's still jam up because we're really good friends," and I said sure and he goes "I have Darrell, and he really wants to do it." I had never met Darrell, but he's really nice and we've been hanging out. As soon as we play our first show and I see the crowd reaction, that's where I will feel like "This is great, or this is kind of



UCSB Old Gym, 3/10/90, photo McClard

crummy," but I think we'll probably have a pretty positive response.

KENT: Sergio's playing bass, right?

BARRY: Yeah, everyone in Amenity except the singer.

KENT: What do you think was the best thing about Amenity?

BARRY: To me Amenity was more than a band, we were family, and we also built a scene. Sometimes bands play and that's cool, but a lot of people say "Yeah we owe a lot to Amenity." We started a scene, and speaking of like straight edge and stuff, we kind of did straight edge in San Diego. There were no straight edge bands, and then we came around. And, yes, we got a lot of negative things said about us, but all of a sudden all these kids go "Wow, this is great," and now all these kids are into fully positive stuff. I just think we made a positive environment in San Diego for bands, and now that we are gone it's kind of sterile, but there are new bands like Shadowbox, which is like ex-Statement and Forced Down members.

KENT: You were the original drummer, so why do you think that there was such a vast difference between say the first Amenity 7" and the stuff you were doing at the end?

BARRY: Tim had a guitar, and Sergio said he wanted to play bass, and I said I wanted to play drums, so we started playing, and thus on the first 7" we had only been playing a little bit. I never took lessons. I had only been playing drums for like a year on the first record, and now with our latest material I've been playing for like four years. We are playing better because we can play our instruments better.

KENT: Are you glad that you learned to play drums?

BARRY: Yeah, I've always wanted to make music, because I love music. I wake up in the morning and I play music, I go in my shower, I have a radio in my shower, I have a stereo in my car. I go to work, we have a radio. I'm constantly listening to music. I love music, and I always wanted to play drums, and so I learned to play drums. It's neat that I never took lessons and I can play, but I'm sure a lot of hardcore kids don't take lessons, either.

KENT: What kind of a role did you play in Amenity?

BARRY: Well, to tell you the truth I was the really quite one in Amenity. I mean like I'm the last one interviewed. To tell you the truth, I knew who you were, Kent, but I never met you. And like *Enquirer* magazine, Vic interviewed everyone but me, which made me a bit sad, but maybe I didn't have anything to say or he knew that if he asked me a question he wasn't

looking for what I would have to say. So he interviewed everyone, but me, put pictures in and everything. In a lot of interviews I really don't say much. I would say I'm just kind of a drummer. A lot of people don't even know I'm the drummer of Amenity, maybe because I look different or something, I don't know.

KENT: Do you think that's just because you are a drummer?

BARRY: Maybe, maybe because I'm in the back all the time, and maybe I don't look too punk rock. But in a way I kind of like being unknown, it really doesn't matter. When I go on stage it's like me, it's me on stage.

KENT: Hmm, what else?

BARRY: This is the biggest interview I've ever done. This is the most I've ever talked in an interview.

KENT: Do you usually want to talk more?

BARRY: I don't know, sometimes people ask really political questions and things like that and I can't answer them, I feel like I'm ignorant or something, and that's why I don't say anything. I just kind of lop and listen. Mike kind of dominates the interview, which is fine because he has a lot of things to say, and I like listening to him. When we started the band we just did it to play music and then all of a sudden it started getting political and really hardcore and stuff, and while I'm fully into that stuff sometimes I can't really say anything.

KENT: How did you end up with Mike, didn't you originally have a different singer?

BARRY: Yeah, we had Robin. I met Mike... this show brought together the Pacific Beach scene and the Chula Vista scene and it was a Pitchfork/Amenity show and Mike asked me if I could help move some Pitchfork equipment, and it turned out we both liked Youth Of Today. We started talking and I got his phone number and stuff, and then Robin kind of faded and quit, so I called Mike and he said "Yeah, I'd be fully into singing," and he tried out and we said "You're in." We just went from there. Out of the whole band Mike and I are the closest, just because I met him first.

KENT: We're happy with Mike's singing?

BARRY: Yeah, I was happy at times. Yeah, I would say I was fully happy, but sometimes, to be honest, I would say the way he would introduce the band, "We're Amenity," was kind of dull, but that's what he wanted to do. I just wish he could perform a little better, but towards the end though he was going off and stuff. I just wanted somebody that would really be expressive and go off and stuff, and at the last show he did really well. I think we were at our peak at the last show. I think his voice is the best on the last recording. He was really happy with it, but now it is no more.

KENT: You said this new band might end up sounding a little bit more, I wouldn't say commercial, but mainstream, what kind of music is your favorite music?

BARRY: Well I listen to everything. Everything from full mainstream, like U2, but I listen to full hardcore like Inside Out, too. It depends on what kind of mood I'm in. If I'm sad then I'll put on some Peter Gabriel or something mellow, but then if I wake up and I'm fully hyper then I'll throw on Youth Of Today, blast it, and jump around my room. Hardcore is definitely the root, because I love hardcore so much. Like when I put on Chain Of Strength or something it's just like the energy just gets me going. Hardcore is definitely my most favorite type of music. Plus, it's what they say and stuff, I can really relate to, like a lot of personal things that people have to say with their music. I love it. A lot of mainstream stuff doesn't do that.

KENT: I've heard you work a lot.

BARRY: Yeah, six days a week.

KENT: Did you have trouble getting time off to go tour?

BARRY: I quit my job to go do that. That was a sacrifice that I had to make. If I hadn't quit my job then I would have never seen all of America.

KENT: Did you like touring?

BARRY: Oh yes, I loved it, it was great. I was a little scared because I do have a lot of responsibilities, I have rent, bills, car payment. Right when I got home I got two jobs within a week. So that was cool.

KENT: What did you think of the last Amenity show, just in terms of what happened with the bouncers and just the whole club?

BARRY: I was really happy that it was sold out, it was just a neat feeling because I saw a lot of old friends that I hadn't seen in a long time, but the only reason they came was because it was our last show. It just brought all these old friends together. But bouncer-wise, a lot of my friends said they really wanted to go off, and a lot of my younger friends were like "Dude, we wanted to do stage dives galore, we just wanted to fly off left and right," but they said the bouncers

were complete dicks, and they were. I even did a stage dive and the guy wouldn't let me go back up. Like when Mike jumped in they didn't even know he was the singer and they beat him up. I thought that was really horrible, but it would have sucked if we would have played a smaller venue and a lot of our friends couldn't get in. Actually, Tim and I didn't even get to see the show because we were like cruising around the building trying to get people in. We let a lot of people in through the dressing room. It sold out really early. So I'm glad we played a big place so that all our friends could get in, but the bouncers were just complete idiots. The feeling and emotion was definitely there. After the show I was almost crying, and Mike was crying, and I heard some of our friends were crying and hugging each other, and a lot of people called me a couple days later and said that it was like the most intense show they had ever been to, and they were going to miss Amenity. It was really touching. It meant a lot to me. It was sad.

KENT: Well, I'll ask one last question, it's a little on the political side, but it's impossible not to, what do you think of the whole Gulf war that's going on right now?

BARRY: What do I think of it? Basically I don't want to go.

KENT: Do you think we should be there?

BARRY: I can't really say. It's really weird, I hear two sides. I hear people saying "Yeah, we should get rid of that guy, Saddam or whatever, as soon as possible," and then I was talking to Tim, and Tim would say "Well I don't think that we should have even gone in the first place," but it's already happened, we're already there, so I just wish it would end as soon as possible. I remember the first day it broke out, I was really scared, "Oh, my god, there's a war," and nothing was on t.v. but the war, but now, seriously I don't even know what's going on. It's so thin on t.v. now, well with the newspapers it's everyday, but it's really thin. Like you said, do I know if it should be happening or not, it's like I don't know all the facts of why we're over there. Should we be there or shouldn't we be there? But we're already over there and you can't change that, so I wish it would end as soon as possible. It's kind of weird because I think a lot of people ignore it too because it's not here. We're not going to feel no impact hitting here, it's all over there. The whole war is being fought over there. I wake up everyday, I do my daily thing, and it's like "Oh there's a war going on," I can't really say. I wish we weren't fighting over there. Everybody doesn't want war. But I don't go to protests or anything.



UCSB Old Gym, 3/10/90, photo McClard

Reviewing 'zines is my most hated activity. Everyone that does a 'zine deserves massive credit for putting effort in to an activity that rarely receives any reward, but unfortunately not every 'zine turns out being that interesting. These are honest reviews, but remember every 'ziner has my respect on a fundamental level. — Kent

TUNGA TUNGA #5

Amazingly enough, Tunga Tunga remains fairly unknown even though the content and quality are truly excellent. The layout is artistic and personal, while the interviews (Fugazi & Ignition) are thoughtful, and the photography is quite good as well. In addition, there are a few pages dedicated to an evaluation of the role of women in punk rock. Exceptionally excellent. (\$2.25 to Tunga Tunga; 3329 Lonefeather Crescent; Mississauga, Ontario; Canada; L4Y 3G6)

EXCESS #2

Heavily influenced by the Born Against/Dear Jesus crew, Excess features interviews with Forced Down, Neurosis, and Swiz, among others, along with an installment of *War Prayer*©, and plenty of god-bashing material. Off to a pissed off start, though their is still room for more anger. (Dave Nathanson; Mitchell Hall Room 523; 514 19th ST NW; Washington, DC 20006)

A WORD TO THE WISE #1

Shelter, Amenity, Overkill Records, and Forced Down are all featured along with reviews. It's all okay, but the layout is horribly boring and an incredible waste of space. Condense! Will improve, hopefully. (\$1.25 to A.W.T.T.W.; 5927 Preston F.C. Rd. SE; Fall City, WA 98024)

SOLD OUT #10

The final issues is definitely the best issue. The interviews with Rollins, Pushead, and Fidelity Jones are all excellent, the photography is first rate, and the layout is clean. My only complaint is that their cynicism over the substance and integrity of hardcore is extremely hard to swallow when one considers the lack of political opinion and social concern within the 'zine itself. It seems they drowned in their own cynicism. Comes with an I/Pittbull 7" flexi. (\$2 to Sold Out; PO BOX 7071; Windsor, Ontario; N9C-3Y6; Canada)

MINDSET #3

This really isn't a 'zine in the traditional sense. Each page is done by various people. The editor sort of puts it together, and includes his own contributions, and out it goes. Most everything is really cool, though I suppose it will vary depending on who contributes. Cool concept, and worth looking into, or contributing to. (50¢ to Mindset; 305 Haywood Dr.; Paramus, NJ 07652)

DRASTIC SOLUTIONS #3

Brotherhood, Sons Of Ishmael and several other bands are included in this Canadian 'zine. The look is decent and the politics are solid, though a bit sparse. Shows potential. (\$2 to Draastic Solutions; 2 Embro Dr.; Toronto, Ontario; M3H 2M8; Canada)

TOURIST TRAP #10

Once again Tourist Trap puts together a collection of graphic art, poetry, reviews, political sentiment, and what-have-you. Everything is very well done, and the layout keeps it interesting. All issues recommended. (\$2 to Tourist Trap; PO BOX 1033; Newport, Rhode Island 02840)

SOY NOT OI! by Hippycore

Finally a punk rock vegan cookbook! Complete with the trademark Hippycore art 'toons and witty humor, this is one cookbook that will tickle more than your appetite. Everything is included from recipes to helpful hints to health information to general information. Go vegan! (\$2 to Hippycore; PO BOX 195; Mesa, AZ 85211)

A NEW DIRECTION #4

This is a nice looking, well put together and interesting 'zine that features good interviews with Verbal Assault, Ignition, Fugazi and others. The editors also devote some time to their own opinions, which is nice. Well done. (A New Direction; 741 Confederation Dr.; Thunder Bay; Ontario; P7E 3N6; Canada)

PROFANE EXISTENCE #9

It seems psychotic to me, but apparently Profane Existence has gone monthly, and they have gone to a newspaper format. The new size, combined with the paper quality and the reliance on computers makes it look more like a political party newspaper than an anarchist punk 'zine, though there's still music information included. This issue naturally covers the war. Interesting. (\$1.50 to Profane Existence; PO BOX 8722; Minneapolis, MN 55408)

JFS #2

Opening with a good cover, JFS features short interviews with No Answers, Resolution, and Shelter are combined with reviews and some limited, though well meant, commentary. A quick read. (\$1.50 to JFS; 2603 NE 169th; Seattle, WA 98155)

PATCHWORK #1

Verbal Assault, Profound, Vision, and New Age Records, among others, are all included within, and there are a few political articles about the invasions of Panama and Native American Lands. This is a good start, and hopefully it will take off. (\$2 to Eric Duenas; 4323 Normal Ave. #15; Los Angeles, CA 90029)

REALITY CONTROL #1

With a Cometbus feel—handwritten, quirky and personal—Reality Control takes off with good photography and interesting reading. While focused around local stuff (Downcast, Reality Control, the S.B. fire, local shows) it still offers something for the out of towners. (Free to John Lyons; 5970 Birch #2; Carpinteria, CA 93013)

BSU #7

A shit-load of scene reports, interviews with Infest & Verbal Assault to name a few, reviews, and clutter fill the pages of BSU. Everything is short and sort of one-dimensional, though interesting depending on your personal tastes. (\$1 to BSU; PO BOX 2308; Plainville, MA 02762)

The following 'zines are all written in German. Mario Schranz reads German. He also played bass for Profax, and he does Rebound, which is also written in German. He stayed with us for a few weeks, and so I asked him to do these reviews. — Kent

TOGETHER #2

This 'zine comes from Germany and is limited to 300 copies! Beside the usual stuff it contains cool but weird interviews with 7 Inch Boots and Crucial Response Records, and really bad interviews with Uncle Slam and Bud Brigade (is this supposed to be a joke?). I think the Uncle Slam attitude is the climax of stupidity. All in all, a pretty nice looking 'zine, done with a big effort. It's a pity that I don't get along with the editor's opinions. (\$2 ppd to Michael Friedlich; Rheinstr. 22; D-W-4223 Voerde 2; W-Germany)

ZAP #31

The German mag that impresses with its monthly pressings shows up with a boring issue. Interviews with Agnostic Front, All, SFA... The usual record reviews and tons of boring adds. As a X-mas gift, this one comes along with a Dead Facts 7" for the same price of 4 DM (fucking expensive!). (\$4 to ZAP; Zum Klemmloch 14; 6652 Bexbach; W-Germany)

CLOTHOPPER #1

First of all, this 'zine impresses with a very professional layout. Besides interviews with Charley's War, Blatant Yobs, and No Means No there is a lot of stuff inside that we have already seen before. What's the use of a Wrecking Crew lyric sheet? Next issue could turn out very well if they improve the contents. (Wolfgang Wagner; Fritzenrain 3; 7406 Moosingen; W-Germany)

OX #6

Definitely one of the best European mags right now. This one has interviews with Charley's War, Murphy's Law, NOFX, Shudder To Think, Nausea and more. Besides there are tons of reviews and a special vegetarian cook corner that represents an alternative to the music. As usual Ox comes along with a 7", this time with Go Ahead/Hell's Kitchen. Worth buying it. If you don't understand German then you can still look at many senseless adds! (\$5 to Bodo Mikulasch; Heigergasse 5; D-W-8832; Weissenburg; W-Germany)

TILT #5

Once again Tilt comes forth with a very well done effort that combines music and politics effectively. Every issue is packed with in-depth interviews, political articles, personal opinions, reviews, and just general information, and the graphic aspects are just as strong. Great. (\$3 to Brob Vanbrabandt; Tennisbaanstr. 85; 9000 Gent; Belgium)

FAMILY ALBUM #1

The first issue of this British 'zine is off to a decent start with clean layout, viewable photos, reviews, and interviews with Man Lifting Banner, Verbal Assault, Shudder To Think, and more. Hopefully this won't be the first and last issue. (Family Album; 421 Bradford Road; Brighouse; West Yorkshire; HD6 4BT; England)

Monitor Of Human Performance by Marc Fischer

Surprisingly interesting, this is just a collection of stories and events. It is constructed in a diary format, but it turns out insightful and worthy of reading. (\$2.25 to Marc Fischer; 234 Lloyd Lane; Philadelphia, PA 19151)

CONVICTION #1

This is a very nice looking 'zine, especially considering that it is the first issue. There are short interviews with Judge, Edgewise, and Vegan Reich—the Vegan Reich interview is more a chance for Sean to spew the Hardline way. Nice looking, but pretty thin in terms of reading material. (\$1.50 to Conviction; 131 E. Spencer St. #1; Ithaca, NY 14850)

HOODWINK #4

Hoodwink is a really cool art/political/punk/creativity 'zine that effectively combines a lot of varied ideas. This issue features Born Against, and the Genitorturers, along with lots of commentary and a readable story. The front and back covers are both really well done. My only complaint... self-hatred and over-ambitious idealism can be mortally crushing if one doesn't hold tightly to reality. (.75¢ to David Font; 200 SE 15 Rd. #16-D; Miami, FL 33129)

NO EXIT #?

Bizarre stuff... Interviews include Quicksand, Shelter, Jawbox, Slap Shot, the Holy Rollers, etc... No photos of bands, but rather cut and paste pictures and art work from various sources. I had a difficult time focusing in on anything particular, which had nothing to do with the words, but rather the layout style. (\$2 tp No Exit; 2622 Princeton; Cleveland Hts., Ohio 44122)

CRUCIFIED #0

Short, but interesting, Crucified features quick interviews with Slapshot and Agnostic Front, along with reviews and some commentary. Decent enough, so I assume the first issue will be only better. (.25¢ to Crucified; 156 E. Pulaski Road Apt. #22B; Huntington Station, NY 11746)

BOMBSQUAD #2

Content wise, Bombsquad offers basic concepts on complex issues such as Marx and communism, but this is very much worth getting for the interview with Phil Doan of Poison Free. Phil is a moron, at best, and it is always good to see the fools for what they are. Worth a good laugh. (.50¢ to Bombsquad; 11902 Lanner Place; Laurel, MD 20708-2810)

TRUANT #4

Looking like some mutated East Bay Gilman geek 'zine, Truant #4 offers some clever packaging tricks along with interviews with Pazuzu, Plaid Retina, and Pezz, along with the usual 'zine material. And the first 500 come with the Bomb Pop flexi which features Econochrist, Trusty, Sobering Consequences, Numbskulz, and Pezz. Rush an order off today! (\$3.50 to Truant Inc.; PO BOX 42185; Memphis, TN 38104)

EXEDRA #2

Twice the size this time around, Sonia and Kim come out with a lengthy issue featuring poetry, political opinions, art, photography, personal writing, an interview with yours truly, and a slew of other non-musical items, all of which are very well done in all respects. Excellent, intelligent, and very much worth reading. Obviously highly recommended. Punk rock, though not about music. (Free, but \$1.25 for postage to Sonia Skin-drud; 6660 Abrego Apt. #15; Isla Vista, CA 93117)

You Don't Have To Fuck People Over To Survive by Seth Tobocman
Excellent political comic book. Tobocman puts together an illustrated story about the plight of humanity in a piss-hole of a world that humanity has somehow backed itself into. Kind of depressing in an angry way, which ultimately is both enlightening and reaffirming of punk rock values. (\$7 to Pressure Drop Press; PO BOX 460754; San Francisco, CA 94146)

RAKE #1

This is a good looking half-size 'zine that basically stays away from music in order to concentrate on stories, poems, art, ideas, etc... Very East Bay, but on a serious level. Interesting reading. (\$1 to Brian Buono; 630 54th Street; Oakland, CA 94609)

REALITY CONTROL

The band, the 'zine, the man himself...



The Red Barn, 8/5/90, photo McClard

ZIPPY #1

This Colorado 'zine is off to a decent start with Neurosis, Brotherhood, Sewer Trout and more. Interesting if you're into these bands, but Zippy lacks zip in other areas, though remember this is the first issue! (\$1.29 to Zippy; PO BOX 2443; Loveland, CO 80539)

INFLUENCE #6

Going out with their best issue yet, Influence interviews No For An Answer, Haywire, Chain Of Strength, G-Whiz and others. The layout is good, and the photos are decent, though the so-called two page poster is a joke. I can't claim to have always liked this 'zine, but still I'm sorry it's over. (\$1.50 to Anji Influence; 664 12th St. #207; San Pedro, CA 90731)

(805)

The (805) Crew is actually nothing at all, except maybe a name that I have given to a small group of people that all share the telephone area code of (805). It is a name that may or may not be accepted, but that's all ultimately irrelevant, it's only a name. The important thing is that we exist and we are extremely productive considering how few of us there are. Suckerpunch, Reality Control (R.I.P.), Downcast, Like It Or Not, Monster Club, The Fanzine That-Had-No-Name, No Answers, Reality Control, Exedra, Ebullition Records, Little Red Head Records, and Monkey Wrench are all products of this area—there are other bands as well, but they are not really an everyday part of the (805) experience. The center, or nucleus of activity seems to be a place called The Red Barn in Isla Vista, California. It is literally a red barn that is owned by the city of Isla Vista. There have also been a few shows at the Anisq' Oye Park, the U.C.S.B. Pub, and the U.C.S.B. Old Gym, all of which are also located within Isla Vista.

The Barn shows have been free, as have the park shows, and the U.C.S.B.

The Red Barn, 1991, photo McClard

shows have been \$5 shows, two of which were benefit shows for Sane/Freeze and L.I.V.E. (*Let Isla Vista Eat*). In the last two years Head First, Econochrist, Shelter, Born Against, No For An Answer, Fugazi, Beat Happening, PlaidRetina, Sawhorse, Cringer, Fuel, Shocking Truth, Olivelawn, Bad Trip, Outspoken, Insight, Amenity, Blast, Haywire, Inside Out, Against The Wall, Resolution, Citizen Fish, Conspiracy Of Equals, Reason To Believe, Scream, Jawbox, One Step Ahead, and many other bands have played at these shows, and slowly but surely a small scene has been developing. The following pages are a tribute to some of the people that I find inspiring, stimulating and important. These people are (805) people, and as small and insignificant as this scene may seem I think it is important to remember how great some of the things we have are. We don't have \$10 shows, and capitalist promoters, bouncers, and violent slam pits, instead we have small intimate shows that are friendly, free or inexpensive, and more often than not inspirational and somewhat thought



(805)

provoking. This is no accident. It takes work, effort and dedication to keep a healthy scene alive. It takes a commitment to something alternative, to something unique and personal. Punk rock doesn't have to be about ego games, competition, profit, violence, and stupidity. We've proven that. Subversion takes place on the simplest levels, and in the most personal ways. The task of crafting a healthy environment never ends; the completion can never be attained. The task is to continually strive to inject alternative thought, protest, and activity into

The Red Barn, 9/21/90, photo McClard



San Francisco, 1/11/91, photo McClard

our scene, there can never be too much. This is my scene; this is our scene, and while it lasts we must understand its value and its potential—our potential individually and as a group. — Kent

"Our friendship is something that will never be broken, our friendship is you and me, for all to see" — Suckerpunch

(805)

The Red Barn, 8/10/90, photo McClard



Suckerpunch are the epitome of punk rock in its raw uncommercialized form. They are a three piece that play extremely original, powerful and unrefined music that is always their own, and their messages and viewpoints are equally their own. They are the antithesis of the San Luis Obispo hardcore scene which is mired in beer, slamming, and macho attitudes. Total punk rock, and very much a key component in the (805) Barn scene. — Kent

KENT: Ok, question number one, how did you guys get together? I know there's a weird story behind it.

DAVE: There's no weird story.

JAIME: We're talking about this musical group called Secrets Of A Lost Cause. It was Dave playing an organ...

KENT: We're going back too far.

DAVE: No, actually this is only about four months before Toxic Youth started.

JAIME: It was Dave playing the organ and Joe playing percussion, and after they practiced a couple of times I came and played guitar. Then we thought we would get a real band together.

DAVE: It was April of '88. I still have the first recording we ever did.

JAIME: So we decided to start Toxic Youth. That was me, Joe, and Dave, and none of us had ever played our instruments before so we decided what we wanted to play and we rented the stuff.

KENT: You decided what instruments you wanted to play?

DAVE: Well Joe's Dad had already given him a drum set for some reason. So I decided to learn bass, and the first time Jaime played acoustic guitar really close to the microphone.

JAIME: So then we just decided "yeah, we'll do this." We were Toxic Youth for awhile.

KENT: Why did you change from Toxic Youth?

DAVE: Listen to the name! [general laughter] We did our first demo under the name of Toxic Youth, and then we decided that if we were going to change the name we should really do it before we played any real shows, and then we choose Suckerpunch in September of '89.

KENT: Why did you choose Suckerpunch?

DAVE: We just got it from the Embrace song. I don't remember the title.

JAIME: "It's just a suckerpunch." [singing Embrace]

SONIA: What is a suckerpunch?

DAVE: It's like when you're not looking...

JAIME: ...look over there... [punches]

DAVE: Well that's the literal meaning, but we're hoping people will take it...

JOE: If you really think about it a suckerpunch can be something that gets your thoughts away, or challenges your thoughts when you're not looking.

JAIME: It's also just a neat name.

KENT: Do you think that people might see that name differently than you want them to see it as?

ALL: It already has!

JAIME: That's what Phoenix said. [Phoenix is a S.B. local who does a 'zine called Monkey Wrench]

DAVE: Yeah Phoenix was going to buy a t-shirt of ours and then a friend of his said not to because it implies random violence. Then he watched us play and he thought differently.

SONIA: Your friendship song, it reminded me of a lot of things, but it reminded me of the Holy Rollers and how they have that song about D.C., specifically about their scene. It's called "We," and I was wondering what would make you write a song like that?

JAIME: It's kind of funny that you bring it up because we recorded that song today, and it's a song that I wrote a long time ago, probably right after we changed the name to Suckerpunch. It was before I had heard a lot of bands write about the concept of friendship, like a lot of the straight edge bands, but it was just about what the term friendship means to me, and what it is about.

JOE: It obviously is not glamorizing a crew or a scene or anything like that.

JAIME: Where we live there really isn't that kind of fellowship or anything, I mean we got Possible Risk and everything. [laughter]

SONIA: That's kind of all the more

reason for you to write a song like that, just about the close friends you do have in a place that doesn't really have a good scene.

KENT: How did you guys get into this kind of music?

JOE: I got into it in about 7th grade, a friend of mine was into it, and I started buying the tapes and the rest is history.

KENT: The thing that I don't understand is like how did you guys not end up like the rest of the bands in San Luis Obispo?

JOE: Because they drink, and they smoke, and stuff.

DAVE: I don't really think it is that. I don't think the music has anything to do with it at all. It's just an outlook on life basically. They're just taking the party attitude. They're basically no different than your average teenager that parties on the weekend. I don't know, maybe it was that we were listening to 7 Seconds and they were listening to Aggression.

KENT: You guys don't play around there or anything?

JAIME: One show.

JOE: We got booed.

DAVE: We played two. We played the metal show. We did this metal show with two other metal bands in February of this year [1990], and like the day of the show Jaime called us and said "I'm sick, I can't play." So we got this friend of ours and we figured out a bunch of cover songs two hours before the show. We played it and didn't even know the lyrics to most of the covers. We went "Anyone in the audience want to sing this one?" Every single time this little guy would come up, he had long hair and he would go "MOSH!! MOSH, smoke a bowl, get drunk, mosh!!" Then there was the minister of dancing. He would stand in the middle and he would give signals. One went "Okay, you can slam" and one meant "Get out of here man, you can't mosh."

KENT: You [Dave] obviously developed some kind of conflict with some of the guys up there...

DAVE: It was basically from that scene report. [Dave did the first scene report in Maximum Rock'n'roll that ever covered the scene revolving around the Red Barn, and he also criticized the scene in San Luis Obispo]

It was just because, well I was just telling it like I saw it, and I was hoping that people could see that it was only my interpretation and that my word isn't the law or anything, but then I guess most of them wanted to kick my ass after reading it.

KENT: Have you ever had any real problems because of it?

DAVE: Just at the first show where they were going to [kick my ass], but a friend of ours, or sort of a friend of ours said don't to them. So I think they have sort of forgotten about it. Sort of a short term memory type thing.

JOE: Now watch them read this.

KENT: How did you guys initially find out about stuff going on down here in Santa Barbara/Goleta/Isla Vista?

DAVE: Well, I got a Fanzine That-Had-No-Name free from Blacklist like

two summers ago, and I started writing to Jamey, and I sent him our demo, and he told me to send one to you, and then basically through letters and listening to the Restless Intellect.

KENT: Do you feel a lot more connected to what's going on down here than to what's going on up there?

ALL: Yeah, definitely.

KENT: What do you think about what's going on here in terms of the way the scene is and the direction it is going?

DAVE: I think it is going way cool, but I know that I'm kind of taking it for granted. It's like what the guy [Bill] from Sawhorse said last night, like "I hope you realize what you have here." Because it could easily go downhill from here because people are realizing it is cool and coming up from L.A. and stuff.

JAIME: But those people don't cause problems, I mean like yesterday none of those people that came caused trouble.

KENT: What do you think about the conflict with people slamming and stuff?

DAVE: It seems like it is almost over because it was basically the people from San Luis that were coming down here and I think that they realized that people down here aren't into moshing and so they'll stick to their own shows or something.

JOE: We just have to flyer some of these shows.

DAVE: Yeah, actually we were flyerering these shows up there for awhile, but we realized that was a bad idea.

KENT: It's pretty pathetic when you can't flyer your own town for fear that people will come. [mass laughter] What are your goals in

terms of a band?

JAIME: I'd like it to keep going but there...

DAVE: There is the ominous future... like what are we going to do when we get out of high school. We graduate in June. We're all seniors. So Jaime, you're probably going to go to Berkeley, or you want to?

JAIME: That's where I would like to go.

DAVE: Joe, you want to stay and take some classes or something?

JOE: I don't know, it kind of depends because if both of you guys move to Berkeley then I'll probably move to Berkeley so we can keep the band, but if one of you moves to Berkeley and one of you stays here then I don't know what I'm going to do. I can pretty much do anything for the next few years. I just want to go to a community college for the next few years and it really doesn't matter where it is.

DAVE: I just want to take a year or two off. So that's all up in the air. Short term things we want to do are the 7", and Jamey's comp and your comp.

KENT: What is "Leach" about?

DAVE: Well, the first time we played it I dedicated it to Goldenvoice—charging the big bucks for the shows and treating punk like a business enterprise kind of thing. It seems like they aren't into punk, but just into making money on the shows.

KENT: From what I understand Tovar is a cocaine dealer and the whole thing is a money laundering arrangement, or so it is said.

DAVE: It is basically about using the punk scene, and I was concentrating mostly on the money aspects and how people just leach off of it. They are trying to say they're building an alternative, but there not. It's just a big business enterprise, and that's something I don't want punk to turn into.

KENT: Do you think it already has turned into that though?

DAVE: Yeah, well we can't really generalize that much because like right here it is really cool.

KENT: It's a unique thing here. It's pretty weird to have a place where you can do free shows. I think partly why we're able to do what we do is because Goldenvoice exists. Bands are willing to play here for free because they can't play L.A. unless they're able to make someone a lot of money.

DAVE: Yeah, L.A. is dead. It's stupid.

KENT: What are some of your other songs about?

JAIME: Well, we have a song called "The Pain Never Dies," which is about rape, and it's basically just compounding on top off...

DAVE: I was doing some reading and some studying at the library because I was trying to write a good educated song about it, and I just couldn't really do it. It would have sounded incredibly phony singing all

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standing in the same lines, awaiting the same demise

these incredibly educated statistics and stuff. I mean Downcast can get away with it...

JAIME: But we have an entirely different style.

DAVE: I decided to write it from the gut and what I thought about it. I mean it's really obvious how I feel about it. I'd feel fake singing a whole bunch of statistics and stuff.

KENT: Do you think there really is a scene here? Even though it is so small?

DAVE: Yeah, I think so.

JOE: I think that's what makes it so unusual just because everyone in it pretty much cares about what's going on. I mean everyone who is putting on the shows and the bands who play here all care about it.

DAVE: But that's the thing because the number of people actually doing things isn't that big. I mean there are a lot of people that come to shows. There are advantages to getting more people involved, but there are also disadvantages.

KENT: What do you think about... I mean for a time we were actively trying to stop people from moshing in the Barn, what do you think about all that?

JOE: It's pretty dumb to slam around in the Barn because it is so small that like if one person is slamming around then everyone has to slam around. I guess I have no qualms with it if it's like a really big place and the people that don't want to can stand somewhere else.

DAVE: But the fact that they usually insist on having the pit right in front of the stage, there's no reason for that. It's kind of hard because it is kind of fun to dance around, but it is hard to not interfere with other people's fun. That's basically what it is. Do what you want but don't fuck up other people's fun.

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KENT: What's the idea behind "Barriers?"

DAVE: It's basically that the pit is a barrier between the audience and the band and mainly the messages. I mean it's hard to concentrate on the band and what they're saying and stuff live anyway, but especially when you have this pit and you have to always watch to see if you're going to get hit.

JAIME: Chances are if you're in the pit then you don't even care about what they're saying anyway.

DAVE: Then there is also the sexist element to the pit.

KENT: Do you think that is really a sexual issue or a size issue?

DAVE: It's a size issue. That kind of does involve the sexual, but it is size.

JOE: And because it is a macho man thing.

KENT: It seems like slamming attracts a lot of bone heads. Certainly there would be a lot of "punkers" that would come to our shows if there were huge slam pits.

JOE: All the San Louis people. There is like the "punk rock" that is like moshing around slamming mohawks, and then there is the "punk rock" which is exchanging ideas. The slamming around fits with the mohawks, not really the mohawks but the stereotype.

DAVE: It sort of seems like we're making it exclusive here in some ways, but it isn't what we intend.

KENT: No, but do you think in some ways it can become exclusive when you start to have some sort of rules almost.

JOE: It's exclusive either way.

KENT: Do you think that new people are starting to come to the shows and be interested in what we are doing or is it just always the same people at every show and it will be kind of stagnant?

DAVE: Kind of like we're preaching to the converted, because that's the way it seems to be, unless you go for a completely different sound to play to different people, but a different sound doesn't really appeal to me.

KENT: Well, I think in a bigger scene you're never preaching to the converted. Punk rockers are certainly not the converted, a small faction of them might be, but punk rockers in general are pretty stereotypical Americans.

JAIME: So maybe we shouldn't have driven the slammers away. [laughter]

KENT: It's funny how this area is starting to get a reputation.

JOE: Yeah, especially through Maximum Rock'n'roll with the interviews with Fuel and Monsula.

DAVE: People that read Maximum Rock'n'roll probably think that the scene here is really big. We have a good thing here, but it's not that big.

KENT: It's tiny.

JOE: It's tiny in a way because there aren't that many people, but it's pretty huge because we get huge bands, well not huge bands but we get big bands.

DAVE: But it's not like if you came here on any given weekend you'd be guaranteed to see a show.

KENT: That's only because there aren't that many bands that want to do free shows. During the summer we did a show every weekend for four or five weeks, but eventually

people would get sort of bored. There are probably only twenty people that you can count on coming to every show, and like the fringe element that you need to make the show seem big is going to come every week if too many shows go on. Would you like to play other shows, like paid shows in L.A. and stuff?

DAVE: We'll basically play anything.

KENT: Do you ever get tired of playing the Barn?

ALL: No.

DAVE: But we would like to play other places too. We can't really go too far because of our parents.

KENT: Are your parents kind of restrictive?

DAVE: When I go up to Berkeley I have to say I'm doing something else.

KENT: I take it you don't have any trouble coming down here now?

DAVE: No, well the first few times I didn't tell them.

KENT: So they won't be reading this?

JOE: Probably not.

KENT: What else... anything you want to say?

DAVE: Can I ask you a question?

KENT: Sure.

DAVE: What do you think about the review of No Answers (#9) in Maximum Rock'n'roll?

KENT: Um, this will be interesting. I expected a negative review. I can never see Maximum Rock'n'roll giving my 'zine a totally good review as long as there is one iota of straight edge in it. They will always give me some negativity. So I knew there was no way they could possibly let me off on this [*the front cover*], so it was just a matter of seeing what direction they would take. The funny thing was that the review was by David /alias Jux/ who used to be my housemate. I lived with him for a year and a half and then he reviewed it and was negative, which I thought was funny. The thing that actually bothered me about it was his comment about the thing I wrote about homosexuality because what he said is "a nice piece about being gay," and not that I'm bothered that he is implying that I'm gay. That doesn't bother me, but he changed the context of what I was saying. The whole point of what I was writing was to say that you can't know. I don't know, you don't know, there is no way for anyone to really know if they're gay or not, or if they will be gay sometime down the road. You can't know that. It just happens. So I felt that he kind of took away that level that made it effective. And his comment about the banks and the coffee is all true, but it is irrelevant to the issue. That's like saying I can go out and murder one person because the American military has murdered a 100,000 people. It doesn't make it any less bad. That's a really poor line of argument. But I totally expected that. What did you guys think of my cover?

JOE: Umm...

KENT: Be as honest as you want.

JOE: What I was going to say is what the bassist of Sawhorse [Bill] said... If you look at it from a really personal level then it's like "Man, Kent sure is a mean guy," but if you look at it on like a really big level then it is pretty much all true. I agree with it, but if you're looking at it from a really personal, like one on one, then I don't agree with it at all, but I don't think that's what you meant.

KENT: I didn't, well I kind of did in a way, but there is just no way. I can't possibly hate 99% of the population. Partly I wrote it for Maximum. I wrote it, and then I put it on the cover because I wanted to see what Maximum would do, just because they have such a hang up about anything that's got any straight edge that I just really wanted to put up this wall that they're going to have to cross over in order to deal with all of my other ideas, and just kind of mess it all up.

DAVE: It seems like instead they put one foot on one side and one foot on the other side.

KENT: I don't know. I expected a bad review. I still like it [*my cover*]. I think it is all true and the thing that has been really funny is that all the criticism that I have gotten is... that's the only thing that I can think of that is a valid criticism is that on a personal level I can't possibly do that, but most of the criticism has just been people saying that I'm close minded, fascist, narrow minded, or whatever, or not tolerant...

JOE: They're all seeing it on a one to one level, which really changes it around.

KENT: But the think that I think about that is that punk rock has always been about hate, and it still is, and I don't ever see it not being about hate. It has always been about anger towards society, I mean even like the Chumbawamba record [*Never Mind The Ballots*] talks about hate. If I would have written that about the police, about how I hate the police and

I would like to blow their brains out...

DAVE: Yeah!

KENT: Exactly, no one would have said anything, it would have been totally acceptable because everyone hates the police, and on a one on one level I could have said that. You know, I hate officer Joe Smith and I would like to blow his brains out, and everybody would have said "Yeah, that's really good. Good liberal opinion!" [mass laughter] You guys have an anti-police song, don't you?

JOE: It's anti-police brutality.

DAVE: Well, actually it partially came out of a school project that I did on policy brutality, and one of the things you could get a lot of points for was to write and perform a song on your topic, but I had meant to do one anyway. It's just obvious things.

KENT: Do you think there is a police problem where you live?

DAVE: Well, yeah, but they're not really going around beating on people and stuff...

JOE: Unless you're a homeless person.

KENT: Is that a problem there?

DAVE: It kind of is. Like in this one parking lot twice in one day the cops made the homeless people get out of their cars—homeless people live in their cars there—and slammed them up against their cars and frisked them. I mean, if they would have been dressed in a three piece suit and had a brief case then they wouldn't do anything. The cops really don't go around beating on people in general and so people respect them and therefore they can get away with more stuff.

JAIMIE: I don't think they really go around looking to... I mean they just don't have anything better to do.

JOE: The song is not really about a local thing, it is more about the whole thing. I mean I think why people get into being police is because they have authority and it's kind of a powerful job.

KENT: Going back to something we were talking about earlier, why do you think the whole punk scene between Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz is like the land that time forgot, it's like 1983 and it has never changed... or is that an accurate description?

JOE: Well it is for the bands that live around us.

DAVE: There is no explanation for it.

KENT: Have there been shows there in the last few years?

DAVE: No, they kind of go in cycles. The last big shows was a few years ago with D.I., but now the guy from Jungle Fish is trying to put on shows.

JOE: A lot of people may think his shows totally suck, but at least he is trying to do something. He has like a lot of good ideas.

KENT: Do you think you will be able to play any of those shows, or would you even want to?

DAVE: I don't know, I think we would want to just to at least see what would happen again.

KENT: What exactly did happen last time you played there?

DAVE: Well the band that went before us, their friends were moshing and then they started moshing to us and then I guess some people who were sitting in the back said "You suck," and then everyone just figured "Oh they must suck," and they sat down too.

JAIMIE: We cut our set short after that.

KENT: I heard people were yelling that you were a straight edge band and stuff.

JOE: Yeah, it was like "Fuck straight edge." There were a lot of people just outside drinking beer not really listening to the bands.

KENT: A normal punk show.

DAVE: A few people came up afterwards and said they liked us. I don't know why people even thought we were straight edge.

JOE: I think it is just because we're not in the forgotten '83 period.

DAVE: "You don't fit in, so you're straight edge."

JOE: Well, it's like we don't really smoke, we don't eat meat...

KENT: Are you guys vegetarians?

JOE: Jaime and I are.

DAVE: I'm working on it.

KENT: Everyone always says the straight edge scene is the most narrow and... obviously that's not the case in your area.

DAVE: It just depends on the scene, and it depends on what outlook the straight edge people have about what straight edge is.

JAIMIE: There are some of our friends that look at us and say "Narrow minded, all your music sounds the same..."

DAVE: We don't know if they're joking or not.

KENT: The only reason I ask is because I actually think it is much worse on the other end. Straight edge is much less accepted by people that aren't straight edge than non-straight edge people are accepted by straight edge people. You know what I mean? I mean it is really hard for a straight edge band to play a non-straight edge show.

DAVE: There are so many different ways to take straight edge, too.

KENT: What would be your working definition.

JOE: Cutting out those things that have an adverse affect on your life.

JAIME: Not putting things into your body that are damaging.

DAVE: The way I like to think of myself is, it has nothing to do with whether you do drugs, but just trying not to harm yourself or others. That sounds like a Boy Scout or something.

JOE: No, but I agree with that. I don't really know if Dave or Jaime says they're straight edge or not, I don't really care, I would pretty much say that I'm straight edge if someone asked. Obviously it means something different to everyone. It's kind of like religion, where it is your own personal thing. It's like what Jaime said, "Not putting things into your body that are damaging," but it is so much more than that. I can't explain it, but straight edge to me almost has nothing to do with drinking and smoking because...

DAVE: Well it does, but that seems to be such a minute part of it.

KENT: It's definitely like the first rung in the ladder, and if you can't get over that sometimes you just can't get any farther up the ladder. You get stuck, which is why I think that area you live in might be stuck in 1983.

JAIME: I wonder what's next for straight edge. Krishna Consciousness? [more laughter]

KENT: I hope not. Striving to be someone else's best.

JAIME: So what do you think about the wave of Krishna Consciousness?

KENT: I think it is totally undangerous. It is so hard to be a Krishna. It takes so much time, and so much devotion...

JOE: But then again, maybe it is so hard to be straight edge, too.

JAIME: But everyone's perception of straight edge is different, too. I mean there is a certain set of rules to Krishna.

KENT: But that in itself is true, that's why it cycles because it is too hard to be straight edge. I mean that's why there is no straight edge scene in a lot of places where there used to be just because it is too hard. I mean it really is legitimately not that easy, unless you have a group of friends that you can fill your time with. So I think the Krishna thing is the same way, people will get out of it because they don't have the will power or perseverance to follow something that is so regimented.

JAIME: It seems like you can get into mind control.

KENT: Yeah, but in general I don't think they are that weird, I mean I don't think they are really brainwashing people.

JOE: How do you feel in general about religion going hand-in-hand with music?

KENT: I don't know, I mean from my point of view... I'm a total atheist, and I think people confuse the concept of religion and the concept of spirituality, and I don't know if anyone really knows what either one really is. I certainly don't think anyone knows what spirituality is, it's like this...

JAIME: Ambiguous.

KENT: Yeah, exactly, this huge ambiguous phrase that people fling around, and they have no idea what they're talking about. It's just emotion. I think what music needs is emotion, and sometimes

people confuse that emotion with religion. They're different. What's your opinion on it?

JOE: Well, I agree with you. It's all emotion, and I have no qualms about a band that sings about a certain religion because that's what they obviously believe.

JAIME: How come you are an atheist?

KENT: Just because if there was a god I'd be... first of all I think you can look at the way religion is and I think it is all prefabricated by man, I don't think there is any true religion. And even if there was like some higher being it obviously would be such... why would he let this world exist in this fucked up way, and let all this fucked up shit happen? I just think if there was a higher being it would have to be such a being that was so out there, so different than anything that we can perceive of or think of that we couldn't even relate to it. To assume if there is a higher being that it relates to us in ways that we can understand is to make this higher being in our own image. And there is no way that anyone can prove to me that there is a god.

DAVE: That's like I was

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in the library the other day and I was listening to the funniest conversation, it was like two Christian girls and this stoner and he just kept saying "Well yeah, if you can prove to me that there is a god then sure I'll believe in him." And these girls just kept saying "How come you're here?" That's supposed to prove that there is a god?

JOE: Or better yet, "Read the Bible."

KENT: When Shelter was here I got in a long argument with the editor of Back To Godhead, he was in control of Shelter, and at the end we came to this impasse and he admitted to me that he couldn't convince me. He said "I can't prove anything to you. I'm not going to get anywhere and you're not going to get anywhere, but I can teach you if you will just agree to join me in passive learning," and he said "You just follow me and accept everything that I say, and do what I tell you to do, and you will understand me," and I'm like "Okay you do the same for me and I'll teach you that trees are made of lead, and..."

DAVE: Passive learning, that's such a contradiction.

KENT: That's exactly what they want. They believe that they are on such an advanced level than the average human that the only way the average human can even understand them is to totally free yourself and let them tell it to you because you can't even comprehend it on your own. Religion is just, in terms of Christianity I think if there was a god in Christian terms, I don't even think he would be worth serving. It's like he is really vain because you've got Christians saying that all you have to do is love Jesus and you'll be saved, what's he get out of it?

JOE: He already controls everything already.

KENT: Exactly, it's like this free choice thing, is it his entertainment, his soap opera? "Well let's see what old Kent will do today, I'll mark him down in the black book."

DAVE: That was a Mark Twain story actually. There was a guy who was an angel or something and he would just start worlds. He would take clay and make these characters and then they would like start walking and he would say "Watch this" and drop a rock on them. It was entertainment just like you were saying. He would laugh, too.

KENT: Then there is that whole argument that was in Catch 22, if there was this god then we should put him on trial because he has really violated people's dignity. Why would god create disease in old people so that they would lose control of their bowels, and lose their teeth. It's just weird. My other point is that there may well be an afterlife or something, but it can't possibly be in any terms that we know and we can't know it, so why dwell on it and spend all of our time thinking about it. If it does exist then it will probably be so different that... it's like if you cut down a tree and turn it into saw dust, is it still a tree? Once you're dead and you don't breath and your body rots, are you still you? I mean, so even if there was an afterlife what exactly is that? It's really weird how religion is getting back into punk rock. That's one of the reasons why I don't think Krishna will last because in order to get into punk rock you have to have a certain strain of anti-authoritarian in you, and eventually that strain will rub wrong against the whole Krishna thing because Krishna is far too institutional and authoritarian.

JOE: And besides I think punk is pretty much about free thinking or individuality, and Krishna obviously isn't.

KENT: Do you think that punk rock is getting better?

DAVE: It cycles. And there are also different areas, like here I think it is getting better.

KENT: But like as a whole do you think it is like more serious or...

DAVE: I don't know, it seems like it isn't really making any progress or evolution.

JAIME: Everyone has said what needs to be said.

DAVE: But then again maybe it's like you can't go into other things until the things you are talking about now are achieved.

KENT: I think partly what needs to happen is that there should be less verbally saying things and more... it's the whole threat by example concept, if you make a really strong example then it's a lot more dangerous than an opinion. I think bands need to concentrate more on what they're doing and less on their lyrics because it is great for people to sing about all kinds of issues but if they don't find ways to deal with them, ways to show other people how to deal with them then it just kind of creates a forum of words that doesn't really do much. I'm just as guilty of that as anyone else. It's really hard to find ways to really actually effect change.

JOE: Well, I think that pretty much the solution is within everybody. Like the rape thing, there is no way that one person can really stop rape, except by doing personal things like not buying pornography.

KENT: On that issue, what do you think about censorship of pornography?

JAIME: You can't do that. Where do you draw the line after you do that? How you deal with pornography is people's philosophy; don't buy it.

KENT: On that same issue, what do you think about censoring Skrewdriver? A lot of people in the punk community support going to record stores and breaking Skrewdriver records.

DAVE: That doesn't do any good. The store will just reorder them. I mean the best thing right now is to encourage stores not to carry these records because the money is contributing to a fascist organization, but then telling Skrewdriver that they can't put this out and we're going to kick your ass seems kind of regressive. That's not good.

JAIME: Do you think that violence is a way to combat ideas like that? It seems like with some people it's just not going to work.

KENT: It's not. Violence doesn't change the situation, it only eliminates the problem temporarily. But on a large scale, I personally think that if this country is ever going to change then it is going to change through some kind of armed revolution. [This in no way includes the Vegan Reich manifesto of fantasy] I don't think anything else but that... I mean I don't think anything ever changes without violence. You can look at the peace movement in the '60s and '70s, it was really violent. The Civil Rights Movement, all this violence. Nothing ever happens without...

JAIME: But nothing like that has ever succeeded with violence.

KENT: You only go a little bit above. There is only a little bit of progress each time. I mean we have progressed some, it is just that the violence stopped. It is almost like the violence has to be there to force people to react because the people that control everything are only afraid of violence. You can't bother the people in power in any other way then to kill them, and to cause violence. You just can't. There is nothing you're ever going to do to make the corporate heads of this country do anything unless you can frighten them physically, and that's what happened in all of those movements, that's what happened with the Civil Rights Movement. You had this violent faction scarring the system and so the politicians went with the moderates, they said "Okay, we'll go with Martin Luther King, Jr." because they were afraid of the Black Panthers and similar groups. The same thing with the '60s, you had this peace movement, but there was this whole other faction that were like terrorist organizations. Patty Hearst, and all this other weird stuff that was going on at the same time. The early labor movement was the same way. But in terms of racism, I don't think going and beating up the skinheads achieves much other than they don't come around any more.

JAIME: Especially in punk music, it seems like if they were going to get the message then they would have already.

KENT: I don't know, because it seems like most bands...

JAIME: I'm not saying that I want to go out and beat those people up because I'm really not for violence in any way.

DAVE: There is also violence in the direct confrontation thing. You can sing about it on stage, but then when a bunch of Nazis come up to you and ask you about it are you actually going to talk about it or are you just going to go "You're right" and sneak away. I think that most people, well maybe not most, but a lot of people would just want to avoid the confrontation. Maybe I would. They want to avoid that, and then the skins think that they are right. I just don't think a song alone is going to change things.

KENT: The other problem with the skinheads is that they want the violence. If you give it to them then they're happy. If you get rid of the slamming then the skinheads aren't going to come because they don't like the music. They don't. They come for the physical aspects and if they don't get the confrontation and if they can't slam then... when we first started doing these shows a lot of skinheads would come, I mean there are a lot of skinheads in Santa Barbara, and eventually they just stopped coming because they weren't getting the conflict and the slamming that they wanted, but that didn't solve the problem, it just means they aren't coming to shows. They're still out there with the same fucked up ideas, but at least they aren't coming to our shows. Is there a racial thing where you live?

JAIME: Just an underlying red neck influence, which is present in all skinheads.

DAVE: But there is no outright racial violence. At our school there is shit loads of racism, but it is the usual attitude type, like people expecting Mexicans to work in the fields, that's all over our school, but people just don't call that racism. It's just a way of life.

Sonia Skindrud is the co-editor of Exedra, a long time contributor to No Answers, an Ebullition founder, an (805) member, and soon she shall be a punk rock vocalist; she is also just simply a good person. On a personal level, she has helped me through a lot of difficult times, spent a lot of time arguing with me, and she has taught me a thing or two about living. She continues to be vital to myself, and to those around us, in many capacities. — Kent

KENT: What interests you about punk rock?

SONIA: That's a good question because I asked myself that last night when we were at a show, because half the time when I go to shows I don't have a very good time. I have an okay time but it's not extraordinary, and part of the reason why I wanted to start *Exedra*, with Kim, was because I was a bit disillusioned with the hardcore scene at the moment, and I felt somewhat excluded from it because of my gender and because I wasn't totally knowledgeable on the subject of hardcore. I'm not too interested in being that way, and I am somewhat alienated from it, but the thing is that when I'm not around punk rock, when I'm not involved with it, when I'm not attending hardcore shows I feel much more alienated from the people out there. The best people I have found, the people I'm attracted to, the people that I have things in common with, similar values, priorities and goals are the people that are involved with punk rock. Just like in every sector of society there is a group within the group that is somewhat undesirable, not very progressive, not moving along with the goals of that group. There are some aspects of punk rock that I really don't like, but it just so happens that the people that I have found to be the most inspirational in my life are involved in punk rock. So I stick with it. Sometimes I deviate and find out that I'm just not satisfied with what I get from other people, which is primarily why I live where I do because I get a lot out of it, and I hope that I give to it, but I think I get a lot more than I give sometimes.

KENT: Do you think that the small scene that we have here is better than in some other places?

SONIA: I've never felt more attached to a scene in my life, and I've never felt more important to a scene, and I've never enjoyed a scene as much. There is something here that has grown into... it is so big, how should I put it? I mean it is very important to me. Despite its small size, the beauty of it is its small size, its intimacy, and everyone here is taking a part in it on an individual level contributing to the whole. It's a real cooperative organization, and I couldn't ask for anything more from a scene. I really couldn't. There are bands coming out of this small scene, there are 'zines coming out of this small scene, there is all sorts of information flowing around at a high rate, even more important is that these people in this scene here aren't only concerned with this local scene. They are also very concerned with the people on the outside of the scene. There is no boundary, there is no clique, per se, that is excluding others from entering the scene. In fact, people are constantly trying to get people involved in it, and I feel that the people that are involved in this scene are highly tolerant of other people, but on a level where they're not afraid to outwardly expose their opinions in public. There is a constant exchange going on in the community without excluding people, and it's just such a balance that has been met that I value it so much, and it's going to be very difficult if I decide to leave at the end of this year. Even though I really enjoy the San Francisco scene, parts of the D.C. scene, and I've seen some smaller scenes around the country and they've never felt as good. I've never seen a scene quite like the one here, and perhaps part of that is that I'm involved in it and I know the people personally, but I just hope that other people could achieve this in their community.

KENT: Before you said you felt alienated because of your gender, do you think that there is something intrinsic about hardcore that alienates women?

SONIA: This is a great question because I've never felt like the music that I listen to has been inherently male orientated. I mean, the speed of the music, the attitude, the outward... When I first started going to hardcore shows, let me first say that I've always been into many different genres of music, and hardcore is the basis of that. It's a style that I always come back to, and always liked, I mean punk rock in general. I've never felt like when I see a band that what's coming out of the band, the energy, the speed, and



the emotion is something that only males could understand, or that is catered to the male mind set, or that somehow it is more male orientated than another style of music. I've never felt that way, in fact, I liked the music because it catered to me. At some point I began to realize that there weren't very many women issue around, and it sort of became an issue, especially pertaining to the straight edge movement as of late, which personally I've gotten a great deal of inspiration from, and of course, as I said earlier, in every circle there is going to be a group of people that are into it for different reasons, have different goals, different priorities. I think the reason that women haven't been involved in the scene as much as men is because they've simply latched onto their socialization and sexual role playing. I mean, men don't have to shed that as much to be into hardcore.

KENT: Doesn't that imply that women need to be "male" in order to be into hardcore?

SONIA: But see I don't feel like I'm male. I mean, who says what's male? I don't know what male is. All I know is that I feel the way I do, and I haven't changed at any point in my life. No one I know has ever considered me to be more masculine than other women I know. I mean some women have long finger nails, some women have pink cheeks, some women have hairy legs. What's the difference? I don't know, I don't know what to say. It's not male orientated music, and if women think it is and are frightened by it then they're just hiding in their sexual role, they're not facing the reality of the world, and the ugliness of the world, and the pain of the world. The women I see at shows just frustrate me to no end, some of the women, because they're there because their boyfriends are there and they are playing the motherly role of holding the home and the jacket and the camera and the accessories that the male brings so that he can run around and feel energy, and feel the hate, and feel the realities of the world in a concrete way, whether it be in the pit, or just standing on the side or up in front where he can take what happens at a hardcore show, that she's not willing to take. And I'm not saying that she has to be willing to take it because I personally don't think that anyone should be hindered anywhere at a show—up stage, back stage, on

Gilman Street, 1989, photo McClard



play on the male's terms and so it wasn't very equal. I was just relating that to hardcore.

SONIA: If women start to feel empowered at a hardcore show, and start to realize that they too can feel these same emotions, I think that is the important thing. That they realize that they are part female and part male, and that men realize that they are part male and part female. And everyone is different combinations of these things. Every individual is different. And if women want to go out there and be more "masculine" then that is there right to do that and they'll still have a primary gender, let's put it that way, because of their physical nature.

KENT: It seems almost like what you're saying is that women do have feminine characteristics that are soft, and men have hard...

SONIA: Why does it seem like I'm saying that?

KENT: Because you're saying that men are part female and women are part male as if there is this inherit definitive difference.

SONIA: Well, okay, I think when I use the words masculine and feminine I refer to what society has deemed them, perhaps I should choose different terms to change the stereotypes, but I think there are certain traits in people brought on by different chemical combinations in the body. Different hormonal variations that develop one's personal traits such as more emotional or more aggressive, and I think some of that is deemed by different combinations in the body, but most of it is deemed by socialization, and I know that I spent a good portion of my life, I prefer to say I wasted a good portion of my life, trying to negate or deny the "masculine" traits that I have—the aggressiveness, the hate, the physical desires that I had because I knew to be desirable, and to be wanted, and to be valuable in society that I had to be the extreme of femininity. I went all the way with that and found only unhappiness and self-hatred, and I finally realized that it was okay to feel the other feelings I was feeling and to express them to people. I find that because I express myself in a more balanced way now, that suits me, and I don't say that it is going to suit everyone, but I am a much happier person. I tend to hang around males a lot more, partly because, at least where I live, I haven't had the chance to meet a lot of women who can accept this side of me in a way that they can relate to. It might make them uncomfortable, and I have a lot of superficial relations with women and I find that I really dislike that. I really desire to have

Gilman Street, 1989, photo McClard

female friends that I can share both sides of myself with. There is just one thing that I want to say on the subject of sexism because it is one that is really important to me, and I've been getting a lot of mail from guys lately that have been commenting on the subject of sexism and different things I've written on the subject, and a lot of them don't know how to feel about it, and a lot of them feel really bad about their desires and feel really just guilty. I think a lot of

kids, and a lot of kids in the hardcore scene especially have lately felt that they need to stop feeling human, that they need to take the other extreme. Sexism is a problem. Sexism is a problem for women and sexism is a problem for men. It's not just sexism against women. Sexism means gender roles gone awry, it means people in the middle are not allowed to exist and be accepted in society. There are so many facets to sexism. You can't just say that it is women not getting equal pay. It's what happens on the street everyday. It's men interrupting women, and big bully men interrupting the young skinny guy next to him in class. It's a hierarchy of gender roles and there have been some men who have asked me to write on the subject because they don't know how to describe it, and my answer to them is that you experience sexism everyday. You play a gender role. You contribute to the problem. It is intertwined with all sorts of other hierarchic systems like speciesism and ageism and classism, and you play a role in all of those isms, and if you don't realize that you do, and if you don't realize that you suffer because you're playing your role. If you're just playing your role to play your role then there is probably a problem because you don't know who you are, and you're not comfortable with who you are, and you need to find out who you are. Until you do you won't be a very happy person. You may be very masculine and you may be very feminine, but not because society deems you so. I just feel that men need to start thinking about who their role affects their lives, and whether they've made the choice to be that way or whether they feel pressured to be that way. If they don't feel that they are involved, then they better think twice.

KENT: Lately the whole abortion issue has been getting a lot of attention in the punk community, so what do you as a woman think about abortion?

SONIA: At first glance, abortion is a difficult issue to decide. Many view it as the mindless killing of third party innocents. But is abortion really murder? Is it that simple? We have to ask ourselves: why is there abortion? Is it because people are lazy and self-indulgent? I say no. Sex is not merely self-serving. Abortions are the result of much larger socio-economic ills that are imbedded in our society. Historically, women have not had control over their thoughts, actions, or their bodies. The fact that there are male gynecologists is ludicrous! Sex, as portrayed in the media and as practiced in everyday life, is often a mind game wherein the woman's duty as object is to please the man. She is not to be the aggressor. And in addition she alone must carry the burdens of prevention, protection, and pregnancy. The male thinks only of pleasure. So what happens if she is not expecting to have intercourse? What if she is coerced, however gently, into the act? What if she is raped? What if she is raped by her father? Who will believe her? The cop? The judge? The jury? Did she ask for it? After all this mind play, she probably blames herself. It's so ironic how the media bombards us daily with highly suggestive, sexual imagery and then we are expected to be untainted virgins. The capitalists make good money off our hormones. How important is sex really? Can you tell or are you being told? We've got all these puritanical white folks complaining about the high rate of unwanted pregnancies and the liberal practice of abortions in this country and I don't see them out campaigning for sex education in the schools. Seems as though they would rather pray abortion away in between the pledge of allegiance and recess. I mean who's to blame when a poor woman gets pregnant because she lacked information and access to inexpensive advice and birth control? What if she can't financially support a child? What if her husband's skipped out on her? Is adoption an option for someone who can't afford not to work? I'd like to see a statistic on how many pro-lifers have adopted children, especially minority children. Abortion has serious economic implications. Now that the states get to decide the issue, the wealthy remain untouched. If California outlaws abortion, for instance, I could fly over to Arizona to get the job done. Low income women cannot. Legislation is not the answer. It only deals with the result of a much larger problem that needs a permanent cure. These women will resort to drastic means to get the same result as their rich counterparts. Wire hangers and hackers will be in business. And suddenly there will be two deaths on our hands—the mother and the child. Abstinence, you say? Human nature is not wrong. The manipulation of that nature is. Abortion will not go away until sexism, gender loyalties, and economic inequalities do.

Sonia Skindrud
6660 Abrego Apt. #15
Isla Vista, CA 93117



Jamey Billig

(805)

It is 3:35 in the morning and the scene is the legendary "(805)" Copie Shop, a seemingly normal copy shop in all respects, except for the fact that Jamey Billig editor of The Fanzine That-Had-No-Name, one time vocalist for Reality Control, owner of Little Red Head Records, and long time social deviant is employed here as a graveyard worker, and under his guidance it is occasionally transformed into a mecca of punk rock creativity. Born Against has played here, Exedra and The Fanzine That-Had-No-Name have been printed here, Ebullition releases have been designed here, and virtually every flyer and political leaflet that has come out in the last year has been designed and printed in this shop. In many ways this is an integral part of the (805) scene. — Kent

KENT: Okay, keeping with the theme of things, do you like your job? JAMEY: In as much as it is a job, no. I mean as jobs go, yes, it is pretty cool but I have a distinct problem with the notion of jobs in which you sell a portion of your life in order to gain silly little things, and that you are basically by the social contract that we have these days required to or else face the stigma of unemployment or "oh, you still live at home," or "you don't work?" I have a real problem with the fact that roughly a third of my life—if you figure eight hours a day, which is a third of twenty-four hours—is spent working. However, if we accept the notion that I have to have a job no matter how stupid jobs are, and they are very stupid, then it is a cool job. I have no supervision, I can have punk bands play live, I can make fanzines for myself and for other people, print record covers, etc... Don't show this to my boss. It's generally just a cool thing, but given the option of not working then I would choose to not work. I think it is a waste of my life and I think it is a waste of most people's lives.

KENT: Do you like working the night shift?

JAMEY: Well, everyone knows that you have to stay up all night and sleep during the day to maintain a punk lifestyle.

KENT: You do?

JAMEY: Consult your punk rule book. It is one of the primary concerns.

KENT: Are you a punk?

JAMEY: Well, I stay up all night. Yes, I do like working night shift because I don't have to deal with as many people because most people aren't punk and don't stay up all night, and I simply don't want to have to deal with people. I believe most of them, the majority at least, to be both irrational and immoral, and I don't like having to deal with either of those traits.

KENT: Couldn't you work a different job?

JAMEY: A job that isn't people related? Yes, but then I couldn't be involved with printing because the copy shop where I work is a service orientated and people orientated job.

KENT: Okay, back to my question, are you punk?

JAMEY: I think so, yes.

KENT: What is punk and how do you fit into that?

JAMEY: I don't know. I think punk is, in a cute little phrase, being the kid who says, "The Emperor is stark fuckin' nude," and that's how I see our society. We've got lots of people standing around going, "Oh it's a lovely garment, King, blah, blah..." They're saying this about just everything we do in our daily lives, and I'm willing to be the guy that says, "No, the King is naked, our society is full of shit on almost all levels." I think basically that that's what being punk is. Acknowledging the way things are instead of giving some petty little justifications, and then also saying, "I see this for what it is, and I will not be a part of it." That's what I believe I am doing in the way I live my life and in my sworn philosophies, and so I feel that, yes, I am punk.

KENT: Is there any real significance in that? Is that more meaningful than just going about living your life like everybody else?

JAMEY: To further the punk thing, I think that in being punk you are being alive. To be punk is to live because I think most people that just go about "living" their lives aren't alive. I think they are simply living. They

aren't alive. I think adults, I mean part of punk is staying young, keeping your ideals, and your dreams. And I think most human beings, or certainly Americans, who are walking around are all "adults," and adults are simply a body, a corpse which is a sad tribute to the child they once were. I don't like them, and I do not want to be like them.

KENT: Do you think most punks are punk?

JAMEY: I think there is no shortage of punks who are in fact just living and they have adapted a lifestyle that they no longer know the meaning of, or they do not comply with the philosophy behind the lifestyle they have adapted, however that is not the case with me. There are lots of cliche punks, but I think that the percentage of people that are punk in a real sense or even in just the sense of the fashion, the appearance, the attitude is so minimal compared to the rest of society that I hardly think it is worth the distinction, but yes there are people who are into punk who are just as big of idiots as the people who work a nine to five job and have a nice day.

KENT: Would you call yourself straight edge?

JAMEY: Gee, would No Answers talk about straight edge? Yeah, I do very much consider myself straight edge. Yes, I am straight edge, and for the most part I always have been. I have gotten drunk after I considered myself straight edge, but it was mostly just to back up the belief that... "wait a minute let's see exactly what this is I'm denouncing so that I actually know what it is I'm talking about." And I've gotten drunk in that sense, and I experienced it and it was kind of fun, but for the most part it was totally unnecessary and I consider it counter-productive to how I want to live my life. It prevents me from living. KENT: Why do you think there is so much animosity towards straight edge people from those who are not straight edge?

JAMEY: The common explanation of those who hold the animosity towards straight edgers is that we're all a bunch of little close minded fucks, and I'll grant that just as much as there are cliche punks there are straight edgers who do fall into the convenient mold of mommy pays the bills and blah, blah, blah... all the things they say, but the majority of them are not, they are people like me. Example, like Code of Honor have an X on their record, and they are hardly little conservatives. They're talking about overthrowing the government through revolution. They might not have been explicitly straight edge, but they had an X on the cover of the hand of their second record and they talk about things like getting the monkey off of my back. But back to the real question, which is "why is their animosity?" Truthfully, I feel it is because it threatens their lifestyle, and people will come up with any other explanation rather than admit that there may be some truth to what people that are straight edge are saying, and I mean I talk to you all the time about the cover of your last 'zine, but I think it is a great example of it, of people essentially wanting to say "Blahefg, blaheyte, this is just not right," primarily because they don't want to admit that they are talking part in something that is causing pain to other people. It is not simply their choice.

KENT: Why do you do The Fanzine That-Had-No-Name? Or why did you start doing it?

JAMEY: It would be difficult to say why I started it. As reflected by the name, I knew that I wanted to do something, but I really didn't know what I wanted to do, and the name is meant to reflect that, because it's not supposed to be some platform, and for all of my ranting about being straight edge or being alive, etc, etc it is fairly apolitical, my 'zine that is, is mostly



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The Red Barn, 8/10/90, photo McClard



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apolitical. It was mostly just to show people that “look you can do something and things are being done, why don't you do something yourself.” I don't know, it was really the idea that there is a lot out there so why not take part in it, and I think it was also a fanzine. It was a reflection of some things that were so important in my life, that really provide my life with meaning, and I would like to share that with people because it makes me happy, and I would like other people to be happy. As much as I don't like humans in terms of their behavior—this might alter their behavior—but ultimately even if I don't like them I would like them to be happy and to enjoy what you're doing. Altruistic in that sense.

KENT: In terms of saying that you don't like other people for their actions, do you think your actions are totally legitimate? Do you feel that your life is on a level that is fully legitimate and...

JAMEY: No, I have discrepancies all the time, and I don't any more as much, but I used to literally punish myself in the physical sense. I mean I have lots of scars just because I was not doing everything that I could, that I was not living up to my own ideals. But currently I am working, and will continue to work to live the life that I think is most in accordance with truth and my own happiness, and my own respect for myself. In other words I don't want to continue to do things that I think are wrong just for their convenience, an example would be that I have stopped driving my car because not only do I feel that it is harmful to the world and to all life, which I hold... I think there is some value in life, human and otherwise. It is environmentally damaging, but specifically it is this war that kicked me into it. Essentially, I think that driving your car was supporting the war, supporting the patriotic lie that this country was somehow more important than other countries that were invaded in this last year, that we invaded. And it wasn't a case of good and evil as George Bush would like to say. The bumper stickers prove it. They were “Kick their ass, take their gas,” and that's what it came down to for most Americans. Whether that was the legitimate reason for the war or not, that was what Americans were basically sold on—this is important, it threatens our lifestyle because we need gas. I've stopped driving my car because I don't want to be a part to that lie and I don't want to perpetuate the fact that we need gas.

KENT: But you still drive your car sometimes don't you?

JAMEY: I do, that's true, especially lately because it has been raining, and I did ride my bike a few times in the rain just to be hard-nosed and I froze. It was nuts, and sometimes I'm just lazy. I say I'm not living perfectly, and don't claim to be, but I'm trying to.

KENT: Why do you think that most Americans, as you say, are stupid, immoral, and irrational?

JAMEY: There's no pressure not to be. I mean I think that's probably about it. They are given everything they need, so there's very little reason to question it. Most people, not just American's, but throughout the world, will not... it's that little saying, if it ain't broken then don't fix it. Essentially their lives are functioning fine so they don't care what's going on otherwise. The fact that their lives are functioning fine causes other people's lives to end, as in literally our lifestyles kill people all over the world. That doesn't seem to affect them, but it does affect me. I'm really troubled by that. It bothers me, I stay up late thinking about it.

KENT: Do you have any qualms about stealing from work?

JAMEY: I do. I do because it is the question of ends justifying the means really, but I have problems with

it because ultimately I feel that I'm coming across like I'm lying by saying “No, I'm not stealing.” I think it is probably good that this company actually I don't so much steal from work, but I don't charge them for what they do, and I don't think of thing. I feel that people should be able to think it should cost them anything. I have a problem, but on the other hand I do have this problem, and on the other hand I'm violating my own code...

KENT: It's just the fact that you're lying about the free services?

JAMEY: It's that I am being deceptive.

KENT: What do you think about what has happened in Santa Barbara?

JAMEY: In the last year or two there have done some things that I think are important in terms of being large scale or that we have done, but it has been a lot of fun and more important to be done. All of our shows have been for free, we have to have the money involved, and we know security, advertising, renting the hall, that we've said we don't need the promoters, that's really cool. Did you have anything to do with that?

KENT: No, it's just that you're one of the bands that actually lived here for an extended period of time.

JAMEY: It's more ideological based.

KENT: I mean we're still having a lot of fun here, we have time at our shows, but in the past it used to be that you'd have to pay for your 40 ounce and run in a circle and the show would still be free, at least shows at the Barn, but other than it was a punk show, whereas now we have an emphasis on higher things like selling records, bands that are local like Downcast, Subversive, a talented band that I was in, were all bands that explained songs, and more often than not gave explanations, and generally tried going into the music that is good. I would rather see the music that is good, then for it to simply be a good way to make money.

KENT: Do you think that punk rock has lost its aspects as it is about the musical aspect?

JAMEY: I think it has become more of a general question because the music originated from a statement against how music was meant to go through certain rules of conduct for records, doing all sorts of stuff. So I think that the way the music was released was not simple a collaboration of notes.

KENT: What is punk rock in 1991 still about?

JAMEY: In general, that the world is still here, then when punk rock first said “Wait son, this is not right,” that is even more so, but people have stopped saying it is wrong. It's not that it hasn't been gotten tired of saying that it is wrong, therefore I'm still inspired to act out and do what I do.

KENT: But do you think there might be a difference?

JAMEY: There probably is, I mean I have different needs to be met, and one of them is that I am entertained, and in fact, yes, the music is because you like this music. There are different messages scattered here and there, different bands that do it, and the fact that I don't like all of them does play a large part in it.

KENT: I must be able to think up another question.

JAMEY: You can keep asking me questions, it's really cool, then you cut the boring shit.

KENT: But that's not the Kent McClard question.

JAMEY: I have a question, why am I still here?

To be continued



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KENT: Why do you think that most Americans, as you say, are stupid, immoral, and irrational?

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KENT: Do you have any qualms about stealing from work?

JAMEY: I do. I do because it is the question of ends justifying the means really, but I have problems with

it because ultimately I feel that I'm compromising my own integrity. I feel like I'm lying by saying "No, I'm not stealing," and I am. Even though I think it is probably good that this company I work for loses business... and actually I don't so much steal from work as much as people come in and I don't charge them for what they do, and I give people discounts, that kind of thing. I feel that people should be allowed to do those things, I don't think it should cost them anything. I hate money, I'll just say that outright, but on the other hand I do have this problem with the fact that on the other hand I'm violating my own code...

KENT: It's just the fact that you're lying, not so much that you're giving the free services?

JAMEY: It's that I am being deceptive about it. That is my qualm.

KENT: What do you think about what's going on in the (805) scene, and what do you think about what has happened in the last couple of years here in Santa Barbara?

JAMEY: In the last year or two there has been a small group of us who have done some things that I think are really great. I mean it's not great in terms of being large scale or that we've really accomplished anything, but it has been a lot of fun and more importantly we have proven that it can be done. All of our shows have been for free, we've said that no we don't have to have the money involved, and we have done it all ourselves, you know security, advertising, renting the halls, everything. It's just the point that we've said we don't need the promoters or their money, and I think that's really cool. Did you have anything else in mind?

KENT: No, it's just that you're one of the few people involved that has actually lived here for an extended period of time, so is there a major difference between what is going on now and what has gone on in the past?

JAMEY: It's more ideological based rather than something fun to do, I mean we're still having a lot of fun here obviously, I mean I have a good time at our shows, but in the past it used to be your mindless slam-fest. Get your 40 ouancer and run in a circle and that was about the whole of it. It was still free, at least shows at the Barn, but there wasn't any real emphasis other than it was a punk show, whereas now it is both free and there is an emphasis on higher things like selling lots of 'zines, records, most of the bands that are local like Downcast, Suckerpunch, and the not nearly as talented band that I was in, were all bands that spoke in between songs and explained songs, and more often than not provided lyric sheets, provided explanations, and generally tried going beyond just being a band, and I think that is good. I would rather see the punk rock movement embrace that then for it to simply be a good way to kill a Friday night.

KENT: Do you think that punk rock is as much about the ideological aspects as it is about the musical aspects?

JAMEY: I think it has become more so. But I'll even answer yes to the general question because the music originally was a statement. It was a statement against how music was meant to be played, or how you had to go through certain rules of conduct for both being a performer, releasing records, doing all sorts of stuff. So I think that fundamentally the music and the way the music was released was very much a political statement and not simple a collaboration of notes and chords.

KENT: What in punk rock in 1991 still inspires you to take part in punk rock, specifically or general?

JAMEY: In general, that the world is still just as screwed, if not more so, then when punk rock first said "Wait something is wrong," and I would say that it is even more so, but people have simply gotten jaded to it, and bored with saying it is wrong. It's not that it has gotten less wrong, it's that people have gotten tired of saying that it is wrong. To me it is still wrong and therefore I'm still inspired to act out and speak out against it.

KENT: But do you think there might be more effective ways though?

JAMEY: There probably is, I mean I have to admit that I am human, I want my needs to be met, and one of them is that I have a good time and that I am entertained, and in fact, yes, the reason you listen to this music is because you like this music. There are other bands that have offered the same messages scattered here and there, there's not as many, but there are bands that do it, and the fact that I don't listen to them says, yes, the music does play a large part in it.

KENT: I must be able to think up another question.

JAMEY: You can keep asking me questions until I say something that is really cool, then you cut the boring shit.

KENT: But that's not the Kent McClard style.

JAMEY: I have a question, why am I being interviewed?

To be continued...

Once again, all records, tapes and C.D.s reviewed by Kent. Everything sent in will be reviewed, but there is no guarantee that the review will be favorable. There is a lot of excellent music out there, and thus good music alone isn't good enough. Lyrics are important. Make a statement. Express something meaningful. Don't entertain me.

W/PITBULL - 7" flexi
Sold Out #10 came with this free flexi, which features one song by each band. I am a twisted medley of Rollin's Band and the Bad Brains, meaning they rock hard. Damn good. Pitbull are still the metal version of Judge, well more metal than Judge. Again, damn good. (\$2 to Sold Out; PO BOX 7071; Windsor, Ontario; N9C-
5V. C-2)

VICTIMS WILLING - Lost Home 7"
Very professional packaging that is in a major rock tradition with large group photo and full color poster, accompany the two metal crossover songs featured here. "Lost" is personal, while "Home" is about the age old struggle of parent and child. Okay. (\$3.50 to RaunchRecords; 375 West 400 South; Salt Lake City, Utah 84101)

GO! - Root Canal 7" flexi

ARTICLES OF FAITH - Core 12"

look, there was something about early hardcore that is rarely captured today. The music, the words, and the attitude had a certain flame that hit hard with a realism and frank impatience that spontaneously sparked out of the era. Understand this record, and you can understand what hardcore was, and should be again.

TAKE THAT - 7"
New Wave Pop music turned into mainstream disco long ago. Completely pointless. (\$2 to Art First Productions, 333 Franklin Blvd; Merrick, NY 11566)

LIFE'S BLOOD/STICKS AND

STONES - Live /
Life's Blood were an excellently brutal sounding hardcore band, and these five tracks serve as evidence. Stick to them just as good both musically and lyrically. Decent sound quality. (\$3 to Forefront Records; 280 Fairmont Avenue; Chatham, NJ 07928)

ONE BLOOD - Untitled 7"
Excellent stuff here from Canada's One Blood. The style is fast fuzz saw guitar with extremely clear and understandable lyrics that cover racism, U.S. intervention, religious conquest, and a host of other topics, all of which are well done and thoughtful. In addition to a lyric sheet, there is also a booklet on racism. Impressive on all counts! (\$3 to One Blood; 2 Embro Dr.; Downsview, Ontario; 4321 249, Canada)

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SHEER TERROR - Just Can't Hate Enough 12".
A band that they may be, but somehow Sheer Terror's brutal
sludgecore, which seems influenced by experimental, is appealing in
all its power and energy. Lyrically, they are dark, to the
point where a song like "Cup O' Joe" revels in self-decay, and
"Burning Time" preaches the glory of apathetic hate. At times it
is so dark that it verges on parody, but in general it's somewhat
believable. Interesting both musically and lyrically, but not
something to base one's life on. (Blackout! Records)

VICTIMS WILLING - I Lost Home 7"

Very professional packaging that is in a major rock tradition with large group photo and full color poster, accompany the two metal crossover songs featured here. "Lost" is personal, while "Home" is about the age old struggle of parent and child. Okay. (\$3.50 to RaunchRecords; 375 West 400 South; Salt Lake City, Utah 84101)

BETRAY - 7" With a sound which is very similar to Slap Shot, without the metal trimming. Their lyrics are in a straight edge vein, though other topics, such as fascist skinheads, are covered as well. Nicely done. (\$5 to Cruci al Response; Kaisersfeld 98; 4200 Oberhausen I; W. Germany)

This is war on entertainment, war on complacency, war on the motion of music, war on the industry of music. Music that burns the emotion, that burns the mind, that burns the system, that inspires the war... Music is more than notes and chords. Music is more than notes and chords. Music is more than notes and chords...

BREAKDOWN - The '87 Demo 7"
Definitively N.Y. hardcore from '87. By now everyone has probably heard them, but they offer it forceful playing with both mosh and thrash elements, and personally lyrics that tended to be on the macho-street-tough-guy side, which was kind of dumb. (Blackout Records)

THE BARNEY LOVE TAPES - 7"
Stupid, (\$3 to Vinyl Communications; PO BOX 8623; Chula
Vista, CA 91002)

MANIACS - Thrown To The Dogs 12"
Musically, the Maniacs are pretty damn good. The sound is influenced by some of the better English punk bands (G.B.H. comes to mind instantly) of the late '70s and early '80s. Unfortunately, the lyrics are pretty... well not bad, but just kind of benign. An enjoyable listen (Black Fantasy Records; Konigstor 1; D:3500 Kassel; W-Germany)

DAVID HESS - 7"
"Voices Of America" sounds a bit like a Social Distortion song, and "Genetic Debris" is a new wave pop song out of the late '70s, and "The New Enemy" follows suit as a new wave pop tune with techno influences. Sort of interesting in an odd way. A lyrics sheet would have been nice. (MSR Productions; 1186 South Main, Suite 1221, Salt Lake City, UT 84101)

NAIVE - From Moscow 12" Out of Moscow, Russia comes Naive, a band that mimics the Sex Pistols to an astonishing level. The music is completely 1977 Sex Pistols complete with Rotten's vocal style. Unfortunately, the lyrics are not up to par with the brilliance of Rotten, but considering the origin this is still some excellently snotty punk rock. Great production, as well. (\$6 to M.a.x.i.m.u.m Rock 'N' roll; PO BOX 288; Berkeley, CA 94701)



THE TROUBLE WITH LARRY - Anemone 7" Weird post-punk, techno-pop dirge? Parts of these songs are really cool, while other parts suck shit. The studio f-x are extreme, and the final outcome is pretty demented. Weird. (Good Kitty Records; 201 A.N. Davis Ave.; Richmond, VA 23220)

A CHORUS OF DISAPPROVAL - Truth Gives Wings... 12" As much as I preach the benefits of the straight edge, and even though I consider myself to be militantly straight edge (in terms of my own actions), I cannot help but laugh when someone claims to be judge, jury, and justice itself. Stomp on what? On everyone not like you? I can relate to the motivation and emotion, but not the statement. By the way, fuck God. (Nemesis)

BLUERIA - Demoniac 7" Satan speaks Spanish? Spanish grindcore on downers? This is a joke right? Lyrics in Spanish, heavy on bass, and dirge. Hmmm.... (Nemesis)

FUGAZI

PITCH FORK - Eucalyptus 12" Self-condemned to little more than quality entertainment, Pitch Fork offer no substance lyrically, and musically they blatantly steal from Fugazi at times, though mostly their sound remains their own as they churn out semi-successful tunes that fuse experimental approaches and alternative rock influences with a singing approach that has the trappings of emotion, but where it comes from remains a mystery. Hot and cold. (Nemesis)

SICK OF IT ALL - We Stand Alone 7" Admittedly, Sick Of It All play damn good music, and their lyrics are often just as good, but the reality is that this has about as much validity in hardcore as New Kids On The Block. In-Effect Inc. has nothing to do with punk rock. In-Effect Inc. exists to make money, and Sick Of It All is just another investment scheme. Also, how does the anti-violence message of "What's Goin' On" jive with "My Revenge" and the macho-man slam 'till the blood pours image that Sick Of It All uses as a marketing point? (In-Effect Inc.)

SCHLEPROCK - Do It All 7" Is this the Adolescents, Social Distortion, D.I., Shattered Faith, CH3, or Bad Religion? While updated, Schleprock are very much in the melodic power pop tradition of early L.A. punk, and eight or nine years ago this would have been really hot, but it somehow lacks validity in 1991, though it still sounds great. No lyric sheet (Nemesis)

ONE STEP AHEAD - Breaking The Silence 12" This is a good record with decent personal lyrics and well played music, but unfortunately One Step Ahead sound pathetically similar to Verbal Assault. Most of the songs are blatant Verbal Assault rip-offs, especially the singing. Possibly Verbal Assault's third record? Deja voo. (Nemesis)

Gilmara Street, 11/9/90, photo McCullin
THE HOLLOW MEN - Cresta 12"
Shit. (Arista Records)

V/A - Voices Of Thousands 12" Of the fourteen tracks featured here, a few are excellent, a few are pretty good, and a couple of them are complete shit. Amenity, Forced Down, and Endpoint are the highlights, with Outward, Insight, Intent, and Outspoken doing decent songs, and Relapse represent the shit. Worth it for Endpoint, Forced Down and Amenity, plus the packaging and booklet are well done. (\$8 to Conversion Records; 26861 Trabuco Rd.; Suite E-143; Mission Viejo, CA 92691)

OUTSPOKEN - Survival 7" With hip, short, moshy song structures Outspoken rock pretty hard. The approach is very today, and the groove and energy keeps it "fresh" while demanding attention. Lyrically, they touch on the familiar topics of vegetarianism, self-respect, helping others, and "being pushed too far." Mostly decent points of view, though they need deeper articulation. (\$3.50 to Conversion Records; 26861 Trabuco Rd.; Suite E-143; Mission Viejo, CA 92691)



V E R B A L

DRIVE - Greasegun 12"

This is good melodic rock that retains some vague element of punk energy. The lyrics are... no lyric sheet. I guess this is just mere musical entertainment. Three songs. (A ridiculous \$12 to First Strike Records; 39-41 Hallgate, Wigan; Lancashire; WN1 1LR; England)

BLIND SPOT - All This Hate 7"

"It's payback time, I'm gonna lead with my fist" says this extremely brutal inexperienced sounding band—the brutal sound is more comical than anything else. The lyrics are mostly junk, but "Something To Prove" is a nice exception. Still, hard to take seriously. (\$3.50 to Conversion Records; 26861 Trabuco Rd.; Suite E-143; Mission Viejo, CA 92691)

THE COMMONWEALTH - Nomava 7"

Unfortunately, these songs are pretty uneventful, mellow, a bit commercial, emotionless, and long, too long for boring songs. The lyrics are simple, too simple, though "These Things" has a certain poetic truth in its simplicity. Maybe next time. (\$3 to Free Thought; 5219 Wyoming Road, Bethesda, MD 20816)

STATEMENT - Don't Sacrifice Me 7"

Statement played slow, grinding, powerful, emotionally charged, and hard music that was related in many ways to the approaches of bands like Amenity and Forced Down, and maybe a bit of Inside Out. Their lyrics deal with the personal struggle to overcome the pollution, sexism, poison, and mind rot of modern day culture. Urgent and intense! (\$3 to Battery Records; PO BOX 21281; Seattle, WA 98111-3281)

OLIVELAWN - Sap 12"

This is rock'n'roll in the alternative college rock mold. It comes complete with classic rock riffs, distortion, rock vocals, medium tempo, grunge guitar breaks, flowers, and little or no statement. Ultimately this is '70s rock cloaked in the guise and influence of the '80s. Rockin' indeed, but happenin'? Somehow I hope not. No lyric sheet. (Nemesis)

COURAGE - Jeannie's Story 12"

Well puttogether all the way around, Jeannie's Story features great lyrics that cover social and political topics, a smart looking lyric booklet, quality art work, and an intense blend of fast driving hardcore and mellow influences. Combined, Courage create an intelligent and emotional album. (Let's Make Our Own Records; Venenajaan 47—1623 ra; hoorn; Holland)

V/A - Rebuilding 7"

Turning Point puts out an amazingly good song, which is easily their best ever. Burn does a slow grinding number that takes some time to grow on you. Gorilla Biscuits offer a silly studio out-take, and No Escape makes an excellent vinyl debut. A "percentage" of said profits go to Trans Species Unlimited (an animal rights group) and no, none of the bands address that issue. Damn good. (\$3 to Temperance Records; 3229 West Ave.; Ocean City, NJ 08226)

V/A - Forever 7"

Born Against, Citizens Arrest, Burn, Turning Point, and Rorschach are all featured here. The Rorschach song sounds like shit in comparison to their album. Burn, Turning Point, and Citizens Arrest all put forth good songs, but Born Against destroys everything with their ravaging attack on pro-life anti-abortion religious fanatics. Worth it for Born Against alone. Nice looking, too. (\$3 to Irate Records; 3229 West Ave; Ocean City, NJ 08226)

PORCELAIN BOYS - 7"

Pop punk can sometimes be enjoyable, but these two songs are only a thin shade away from being sleep inducing. The packaging is extremely boring and uninformative, which doesn't help much. (\$3 to THD Records; 2020 Seabury Ave.; Minneapolis, MN 55406)

ACID BONES - 7"

Glorified rock music played with plenty of grunge and pointless lyrical content does not add up to much of anything. Sub Pop, alternative rock, SST, and Touch and Go fans will be excited. Well done for what it is. No lyrics, what's new? (Dead Issue; PO BOX 1645; Staten Island, NY 10314)

HEMI - 7"

Powerful and catchy rock music with a blend of punk—i.e. Sub Pop retro grunge—is what Hemi play. The lyrics seem interesting, though the band must not of thought so because they didn't include a lyric sheet. (\$3 to Shred Of Dignity; 666 Illinois; San Francisco, CA 94107)

POOPSHOVEL - 7"

This shit is jonesin' to be the the next big Rollin's Band-War Time rock hard guitar-twisted success. If that's your trip then this is certainly your fix. No lyric sheet. (Community 3; 438 Bedford Avenue; Brooklyn, NY 11211)

GULAG - 7"

Out of Greece, Gulag play solid quality hardcore that stays below thrash level. The singing is in Greek but there are translations provided, and it sounds really good in Greek. Good band. (Wreck Age Records; 451 West Broadway 2N; New York, NY 10012)

V/A - Bomb Pop 9" flexi

Featuring Econochrist, Pezz, Trusty, Numbskulz, and Sobering Consequences... comes with Truant #4... Some good, some bad. Worth getting the whole package. Comes with a stick, too. (Truant Inc.; PO BOX 42185; Memphis, TN 38104)

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION - Blind Eyes and Apple Pie 7"

Good political lyrics that are worth reading and many steps above mere slogans, are combined with semi-speedy thrash/punk and catchy song writing to make for a well done and intelligent 7". Very respectable, though the packaging is kind of bland. (\$3.50 to Bum Steer Records; 336 Libertyville Rd.; New Platz, NY 12561)

A S S A U L T

Gilman Street, 8/12/89, photo McClard

NAKED ANGELS - The Real Hardline 7"

North Carolina's Naked Angels make their debut showing with an interesting blend of mosh, melody, metal, and rock. "Hardline" decries the homophobic, pro-life conservatism of the Hardline bands, while the other three tunes proclaim the virtue of personal action and group activity. Pretty good on all fronts. (\$3.50 to New Start; PO BOX 10110; Winston-Salem, NC 27108)

LIFE... BUT HOW TO LIVE IT? - Day By Day 12"

Day By Day is a truly excellent record. The music is very rock influenced with a solid melodic quality, and it retains power and an acute level of raw energy. The lyrics are alternately political and social, and always very well done. The singing is a distinct high point, as well. Catchy, subtly powerful, and honest—excellent! (De Konkurrent; PO BOX 14598; 1001 LB Amsterdam; Holland)

"

MONSTERLAND - 7"

Heavy guitar coupled with mainstream-pop singing, harsher choruses, and little lyrical substance... The music is listenable, but this just doesn't offer much. No lyric sheet. (TPOS Productions; 12 Mill Plain Road; Danbury, CT 06811)

JAILCELL RECIPES - Two Years Of Toothache 12"

England's Jailcell Recipes play biting melodic hardcore with quality musicianship and solid coarse singing that works very well. Lyrically, they stick to personal themes that hit and miss. "Divided As Two" and "Told You So" are the most interesting with their criticism of scene division and straight edge. An enjoyable listen, though the lyrics could be a bit more substantive. (A ridiculous \$17 to First Strike Records; 39-41 Hallgate, Wigan; Lancashire; England; WN1-1LR)

BLACK MARKET BABY -

Baby Takes (the collection) 12"

Yeah, Black Market Baby were one of D.C.'s most underrated and solid sounding punk rock bands. This retro-comp combines old singles and lost versions on one disk, and it clearly illustrates the greatness of this excellent D.C. punk band. No D.C. collection is complete without this. (Bittcore/Rave Records; PO BOX 40075; Philadelphia, PA 19106)

LAST LAUGH - Nothing To Hate But Hate Itself 7"

Playing rough hardcore with a raw edge, Last Laugh cover racism, social oppression, personal respect, and similar social-personal topics. The packaging is a bit dry, and the music and production are basic, but the ideas are good, and overall this is pretty okay for a first release. (Out Reach; PO BOX 943; Kalamazoo, MI 49005)

TRUSTY - Trust Me 12"

Trusty play hardcore rock punk with energy and vitality, and their lyrics are a collection of personal and serious observational ditties. In other words, this is a good record, though nothing inspirational, offensive, or challenging makes it too noteworthy. (\$6 to Truant Inc.; PO BOX 42185; Memphis, TN 38104)

THREE LEGGED DOG - Loaded 12"

Combining the trendy '70s Sub-pop rock-rehash sound with the vocal style of Henry Rollins, Three Legged Dog come out with an album full of uneven tunes that feature lyrics ranging from crap to intelligent. No lyric sheet. Sure to be a success. (Bomp! Records)

LIFE... BUT HOW TO LIVE IT? - Green 7"

Life... But How To Live It? is one of Europe's best kept secrets, and Green effectively proves this point. "Green" is a long melodic tune that flows along with a heavy dose of rock based power, and "You Should Have Known Better" is a short, semi-quick blast of energy that still retains that characteristic groove. The lyrics to both songs deal with the ultimate meaninglessness of adhering to society's version of life.

Excellent. (Beri Beri Records; Marcher Str. 32; 2000 Hamburg 76; W-Germany)



SEEIN' RED - 12"

Seein' Red's second release is a bit slower and a bit mellower, but the production has improved and the power, bite, and energy is still consistently present. Lyrically, their songs touch on multinational exploitation, government lies, greed, and the need for people to move beyond words and take up action. The record includes issue #12 of Poste Restante, which also serves as a lyric sheet. Outstandingly good. (De Konkurrent; PO BOX 14598; 1001 LB Amsterdam; Holland)

V/A - Things I Stole 7"

One song is featured here by Christ On A Crutch, Cringer, Libido Boys, and Lupo, and some space in the accompanying magazine is given to each band as well. The C.O.A.C tune is a disappointing cover of a Diddly Squat number, while Cringer and the Libido Boys come through with good stuff. Try to forget about Lupo. The magazine is okay, and the packaging is swell. Steal this if at all possible. (\$4 to Disaster Productions; PO BOX 460346; San Francisco, CA 94146)

Life... But How To Live It?



THE BLOODHOUND GANG - 7"

At times reminiscent of Southern California's Plain Wrap, and definitely in the Northern California pop-punk realm, The Bloodhound Gang comes out with three pop songs filled with personally lyrics that don't get lost in the interpretation. Okay, though far from great. No love song! (\$3 to THD Records; 2020 Seabury Ave.; Mpls., MN 55406)

HEADFIRST

CRAWLPAPPY - 7"

Two songs here. Both continue to be in this kind of weird slow droning metal style that oddly seems to work well. The vocals are slow and dragged out, which is fitting. "Temple Body" offers great lyrics about morality being turned into legislation by those that hold power, while "Mind's Eye" is much more abstract. Thumbs up. (Blackout Records; PO BOX 544; Yonkers, NY 10710)

BREAKDOWN - Killing Time 7"

Extreme pop punk here, despite the ironic titles of band and record. The music moves between decent and entertaining, but why does every fucking pop punk record have to have a song about needing the love of that lost woman? Nolyric sheet. (\$3.50 to Ken Helwig; PO BOX 641; Saratoga, CA 95071)

OUTCRY - The Buffalo 7"

The OuiCry haven't made a musical sound since 1986, so these four tunes are a pleasant surprise. The lyrics are really good, and the music is solid quality mid '80s hardcore. Definitely worth checking out! (Red Decibel)



Sam Francisco, 1/12/91, photo Sam Francisco

YOUTH KORPS - '82 7"

Hard, Youth Korps are Boston '82, and their

music is very quick, short, powerful, and hard. Lyrics deal with drugs, crime, police, etc... Nasty shit. (\$5 to Crucial Response; Kaisersfeld 98; 4200 Oberhausen 1; W-Germany)

THE SCREW - Screw Amerika 7"

Musically, the Screw are not really to astounding. Their style is classic middle American hardcore from the mid '80s combined with semi-distorted vocals, but they get much credit for their insert dealing with the plight of the American Indian and the writing and lyrics dealing with this on their lyric sheet. (The Screw; 415 Lois Dr.; Louisville, CO 80027)

RHYTHM COLLISION - '7"

Some current poppunk influences have slipped into the Rhythm Collision sound, but basically this remains in a classic '70s punk style. Energetic and catchy—complete with required pop punk love song. But don't buy this single! Both songs will be on their new LP. (Dr. Strange Records)

POLITICAL ASYLUM - Solitary 7"

The three live songs featured here illustrate the quality of the political pop punk style of Political Asylum. Great lyrics, catchy music, and the 7" is a benefit for the Digit Fund, which works to save gorillas in Africa. Comes with literature. Excellent. (Off The Disk; Spiegelgutstr. 38; 8200 Schaffhausen; Switzerland)

MENACE DEMENT - 7"

This is a very odd co-released project to be coming from the Venniform folks. The slow monotonous music is coupled with gnawingly coarse vocals, and the words are poetry derived and ambiguous. Hmmm, urgh, ohh.... (\$3 to Venniform/Lungcast; PO BOX 1145; Cooper Station; New York, NY 10262)



The Backdoor, 11/30/90, photo McClard

EYE FOR AN EYE - Omega Drone 7"

Hmm... it appeared that this was going to be brutal-metallized hardcore played to the words of macho attitudes, but low and behold what a surprise! Musically, the sound is medium paced with no mosh or thrash, and lyrically the writing is good and the ideas are relatable. Kind of vague on my end, but this is going to take some digestion and rumination. (Blackout Records; PO BOX 544; Yonkers, NY 10710)

VEGAN REICH - Hardline 7"

These folks play some excellent music that is pretty original sounding, very powerful, and exceptionally catchy, but music isn't the issue here. Their opinions are extreme veganism and environmentalism, which is okay as long as that doesn't mean hating homosexuals and innate talk of violence from middle class white boys. Non-threatening, just goofy. (\$3.50 to Hardline Records; PO BOX 490; Laguna Beach, CA 92652)

HOPEFUL MONSTERS/CRINGER - Split 7"

The cover-booklet is mostly dedicated to police oppression and the criminal justice system, though there are some other inclusions as well. Cringer's songs are two of their best to date, both being very powerful musically and lyrically. Hopeful Monsters is a new band that plays harsh and heavy hardcore with a bit of experimentation. Some worthwhile listening and reading. (\$3 to Hippycore Records; PO BOX 195; Mesa, AZ 85211)

ARTLESS - Beer Is Better Than Girls Are 7"

Mykel Board is a self-created joke, and sometimes his sarcastic absurd attitude actually does cast light on certain subjects, but "Beer" is just a sad pathetic sexist crock that fails to achieve anything, while "Crassdriver" occasionally does hit home, though it is mostly pointless. Oh yeah, Artless plays music, too. (\$3 to Vinyl Communications; PO BOX 8623; Chula Vista, CA 92102)

URBAN DANCE SQUAD - Live 12"

I ain't in the house, enough said about shit. (Arista Records)

REAGAN YOUTH - Vol. II 12"

While no where near as good as the debut Reagan Youth album, Volume II does have a few moments of greatness. "Jesus Was A Communist" is a perfect example, but unfortunately a great deal of the record is just kind of mediocre, though the opinions expressed are not mundane at all. A lyric sheet would have helped. (New Red Archives)

HUNGER FARM - 7"

Why have lyrics if they're not clearly understandable, or if you're not going to have a lyric sheet? I assume that they must be irrelevant to everyone concerned. Other than that, Hunger Farm play energetically with plenty of rhythm and pop influence. Nothing exceptional, though enjoyable, I suppose. (Nemesis)

YUPPICIDE - 7"

With really good lyrics covering yuppie consumerism, envy, censorship, racism, and slamming (anti), Yuppicide rock it up with New York core done with mosh and energy. The singing stands out as especially catchy. Recommended both musically and lyrically. (\$3 to Evac Records; PO BOX 2176; Times Square Station; New York, NY 10108)

ULTRAMAN - Non-Existence 12"

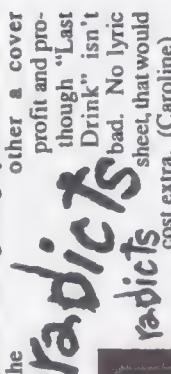
There is no shortage of energy in Ultraman's approach to powerful, fast-paced, melodic, and tuneful hardcore. The singing is coarse sounding stuff that fits well with the music. Unfortunately, the lyric sheet only offers up uninteresting collections of words. A sad let down to an otherwise excellent album. (New Red Archives)

ALL SYSTEMS GONE - Contrary To Popular Demand 7"

Side A is hardcore played clean and quick with clear undistorted vocals and good lyrics about not conforming and environmental destruction. Side B betrays the drug induced hippy influence with a Jimmy Cliff cover and a tribute to psilocybin—or is that a P.C.P. imitation? Hmm. (\$3 to System Opposed; PO BOX 1857; Tustin, CA 92689)

NAKED RAY GUN - Home 7"

This is a pretty weak release with one song being a pre-release from their upcoming LP and the tune, but I guess the goal is to move on. Washed up.



SCARECROW - No Reason To Be Sad 7"

This time around, Scarecrow sound a lot like The Upright Citizens, though the metal influence is still extreme, way too extreme at times. The lyrics are also in The Upright Citizens' mold with "Never Again" being about Nazi Germany. (\$3 to Weed Productions; Sonnhalde 45; 7800 Freiburg; W-Germany)

V/A - Screaming For A Better Future Vol. II 12"

The sixteen bands featured here come from all over the world. Some of the stuff is okay at best, while some songs are quite good, though to be honest this is not one of the most thrilling compilations to ever hit vinyl. Inferno, Crucial Youth, So Much Hate... (\$10 to Weed Productions; Sonnhalde 45; 7800 Freiburg; W-Germany)

HOGAN'S HEROES - 12"

Something sad happened to this band since their last record, at least lyrically. Most of these songs are a confused mixture of love, religion, and jah numbo jumbo—totally empty of substance. The music is reminiscent of the first record, though at times it undergoes a heightened metal influence that is combined with reggae beats. Good music, but the lyrics are unbearable, and the album cover is perhaps the ugliest thing cover ever. (New Red Archives)

NECRACEDIA - Eight For Change 7"

The four songs featured here are medium paced hardcore-metal numbers with decent lyrics that tend to cover the brutality and primitive nature of mankind (not humankind). "Crucifixion" is the most powerful song here with its metalized-tuneful rage about religion and guilt and forgiveness. Effective packaging. (BadCard Records; B.P. 6; 59271 Viesly; France)

RAISE CAIN - Return To Many Shocks & Panic 7"

Japanese hardcore in the true sense—lightening fast music played with energy and power. No lyrics, and no hope in hell of understanding them, well actually "S.E.X." is understandable though stupid. Appropriate title. (\$5 to Arnok Records; Drosteh-Hulhoff-Strasse 42; 4709 Bergkamen; W-Germany)

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God awful, moronic, stupid, Cro-Mags influenced metal stodore with fucking idiotic lyrics to turn a buck is an adequate description of Biohazard. Shove your semi-racist blue color working class pride up your meat eating tough guy ass, you stupid fucks. (Maze Records)

SCARECROW - 7"

The two songs here consist of metal guitar solos and metal constructions, but it still comes off more punk than might be expected. At times it is even reminiscent of a metalized Beefeater, especially the beginning of "Manipulated Minds." "Serious Fact" is a love song, and the other number is about the pollution of human existence.

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GO AHEAD/HELL'S KITCHEN - Ox 7"
 This comes with issue #6 of Ox. Go Ahead play great sounding tuneful and powerful hardcore, while Hell's Kitchen play with a lot more grunge and rock. Both are quite good, and this serves as a good introduction to their approaches. The 'zines good too, though written in German. (\$5 to Bodo Mikulach; Heiergasse 5; D-W-8832; Weissenburg; W-U-Gene's, 11/25/90, photo McCiard Germany)

G-WHIZ - Weight Loss Plan 7"

Poppunk, and, yes, once again there is a love song about that infamous lost woman with the pretty face. Is there some cosmic rule that states that every pop punk record must have a love song? Does it have something to do with torture? (No Reality Records)

SKUNK WEED - 7"

On a musical level Skunk Weed is pretty damn unevenful. The real point of this record seems to be to stress the fact that hemp (pot, grass, etc...) has a lot of useful commercial values that could help to save energy and the environment. This is cool, and very much true, but the info sheet about this topic is hardly worth the cost of the record. Go to the library, skip the record. (Legalize Records; PO BOX 194282; San Francisco, CA 94119)

VICTIMS FAMILY - White Bread Blues 12"

The Victims Family approach, which is a medley of traditional hardcore structures, funk, jazz, politics, Twilight Zone insights, absurdity, wack-o-originality, and anything else possible, can be pretty damn impressive, but a full album's worth begins to grate on one's nerves. The true grindcore? Practice moderation when listening. (Mordam Records)



NAKED RAYGUN - Raygun... 12"

While Naked Raygun has done much better in the past, this is still decent material. The music is characteristic of their (late) style, complete with their patented choruses, and the lyrics are in the personal vein. Lacks the spark of their original output, but still semi-enjoyable. (Caroline)

JESUS CRUST - Blasphemy 7"

Classic grindcore with 18 songs, anti-religious songs—all 18 of them—and gruff tortured vocals. The music is actually pretty good, with both slow burning songs, and fast burning songs. Decent enough, but hopefully the anti-religion theme is only a concept for this '7" because it will wear thin quite quickly. (\$3 to Fudgeworthy Records; 8 Stevin Dr.; Woburn, MA 01801)

HEADS UP - 12"

Commercial disco and funk passed off as alternative funk hardcore or cutting edge experimental power funk is still shit either way you excrete it, at least in this case. (Emergo/Roadrunner Records)

CITIZENS ARREST - 8" flexi

Another live flexi from Rebound Records. This time around Citizens Arrest blitz out their blend of death vocals, thrash, and power. The recording quality is decent enough, and fans of Citizens Arrest will probably be snapping these up. Lyric sheets, lyric sheets, lyric sheets! (\$2.50 to Rebound Records; 10 Alexis Court; Holmdel, NJ 07733)

CRINGER

PARASITES - Pair Of Sides 12"

This is some dreadfully boring pop punk with absolutely no substance what-so-ever. Lots of childishly simple love songs. Sickly sweet. (Shredder Records)

COURAGE/CONTAGIOUS DISEASE - Split 12"

Both of these Dutch bands are quite good lyrically and musically. Courage play a sort of moody punk style that is interwoven with full bore hardcore, while Contagious Disease play a more aggressive style that never hits that intensity. There is a cool booklet included which offers lyrics. Independent and honest. (Think For Yourself Records; PO BOX 2001; 5001 CA; Tilburg; Holland)

THE MR. T EXPERIENCE - Making Things With Light 12"
 Boring. This is just plain boring. Pop punk is usually just kind of boring. MTX is no real exception to that. This band is pretty popular now, and everyone loves them and all, but it just does not excite me on any level, especially considering the purely dumb lyrical content. Boring. (\$6 to Lookout! Records; PO BOX 48: Berkeley, CA 94704)

PROCESS OF ELIMINATION - Anger In Our Eyes 7"

An odd release from this Connecticut band. Three songs cover drug and alcohol problems, "Blood Red Tears" covers the hypocrisy of the land of the free—the U.S.A.—stealing the land from the Native American Indians, and the final tune touches on expressing anger. Musically, they play fairly hard, repetitive, mosh influenced stuff that is distinct to that region of the country, though they throw in the occasional oddity. Defies category. (\$3 to Process Of Elimination; 20 Stagecoach RD; Woodbury, CT 06798)

SINK - 7"

A Peel Sessions bootleg, that seems to be legitimately done, so to speak. Two of the three songs sound a lot like Rites Of Spring, while the last song is very boring in its mainstream or pop orientation. No lyric sheet. Pretty good, especially if you like this style.



Baltimore Warehouse, 10/13/89, photo McClard

TOKEN ENTRY - The Weight Of The World 12"

Reforming with several new members, Token Entry takes, for better or worse, a path that a lot of "professional" bands are taking these days. Their blend of metal, funk, and hardcore works fairly well, though occasionally it deteriorates to pure shit, and lyrically they continue to fuse trivial fun stuff with serious personal and socio-political topics. Varied, and not up to par with their previous record. (Emergo)

BLOODSTAR - 12"

Yes, new age metal is here. No lyric sheet. Maybe elevator metal will be the next big thing, I wouldn't be surprised. You can sell everything to someone. (Red Decibel)

**fidelity
jones**

SENATOR FLUX - The Criminal Special 12"

A portion of this reminds me a bit of Three, and a portion of this is just real boring and irritating. The lyrics are also mixed between good and bad, though there isn't a lyric sheet. Nothing really special, but there are occasional glimmers. (Emergo)

COUP DE GRACE - 12"

Purely metal. No lyric sheet. Rather boring. (Red Decibel)

MAJORITY OF ONE - Rage 7"

Good effort here from Ohio's environmentally concerned straight edge moshcene unit. The music is very today, very powerful in its rock-mosh approach, which is reminiscent of Insted and late Uniform Choice. Good lyrics as well. "Explode" speaks for the middle America scene, and "Rage" is about a struggle that goes on everyday in "our" scene. Respectable. (\$3 to Doghouse Records; PO BOX 8946; Toledo, OH 43623)

CRIVITS - Back With A Message 7"

The Crivits sound is very much influenced by New York, and at times both Sick Of It All and Gorilla Biscuits come to mind, maybe too closely at times. The lyrics cover straight edge, unity, and violence, which is okay, but some more depth is in order. Definitely not that original, though still worth a listen. (\$5 to Old World; Jagerstr. 19; 3150 Peine; W-Germany)

ELEGY - 7"

Two songs here, each being sort a of post-emopunk alternative rock power surge guitar burst conglomeration of influences, to stereotype them. "Separated" has words instead of lyrics, while "Dormant" is more intelligible. Nice packaging. (\$3 to Sunney Sindicut Records; 3113 Eastern Ave. #22; Sacramento, CA 95821) (\$3 to Old World; Jagerstr. 19; 3150 Peine; W-Germany)

GO! - Why Suffer? 7"

Once again Gol come on with lightning thrash... wait a minute, there is a new metal influence and a power bite creeping up every now and then. Musically, this is the best stuff to date. And once again the lyrics cover scene stupidity, gay and lesbian rights, religion and life experiences. Better than the classic Gol record, especially on musical terms. (\$3 to Forefront Records; 280 Fairmont Avenue; Chatham, NJ 07928)

RORSCHACH - Remain Sedate 12"

The harsh and abrasive barrage of Rorschach brilliantly conveys their vision of a life in which pain and pressure become the reality offered by a society which is founded on lies, inflexibility, hypocrisy, and brutality. Tormented and powerful. (\$6 to Vermiform Records; PO BOX 1145; Cooper Station; New York, NY 10276)

WORD MADE FLESH - 7"

Not surprisingly, WordMade Flesh sound quite a lot like A.P.P.L.E., which is in part due to the fact that their singer sang for A.P.P.L.E., and in addition the musical style is similar, though at times a bit harder, and there is perhaps a small X-Ray Spex influence. Lyrically, the songs make a variety of personal and political statements, in a sort of indirect way. Quite good. (\$3 to Squat Or Rot; Tompkins Square Station; POBOX 20012; New York, NY 10009)

COLT TURKEY - Christmas Sucks 7"

A special Christmas release from Crucial Response! The music is fast, powerful, and very well produced hard thrash that packs plenty of punch, and the lyrics are extreme in their straight edge-communist-vegetarian ideology (the message is real, but the method is deliberately exaggerated and absurd). Straight edge-communist-vegetarian humor for the straight edge-communist-vegetarian who has a sense of humor. Colt Turkey lives! (\$5 to Crucial Response; Kaisersfeld 98; 4200 Oberhausen 1; W-Germany)

INSURGENCY - 7"

Brought back to life from the mid-'80s metal punk crossover era, Insurgency play catchy metallized hardcore with raspy vocals and slow mellow breaks. Not unlike the Accused, C.O.C., R.K.L., Neon Christ, and Dr. Know material that came out around that same time. Lyrics mix politics, personal thought, and Satanic evil. Typical of that time. (Heart First Records; Boeckhstrasse 39; 1000 Berlin 61; W-Germany)

ALL FALL DOWN - 7"

With Impassioned personal lyrics that speak loudly and clearly, All Fall Down pulls off a great 7" with slow melodic rock-punk that occasional surges with power. I know the little man in "The Top Of The Hill," and "Honor Among Fools" deals well with those who claim to know salvation. Reminiscent of many different bands, but clearly distinct. Good job. (\$3 to Footlong Records; 3 Highland Dr.; East Greenbush, NY 12061)

411 - Say It 7"

D.C. is certainly influencing a lot of bands these days, and 411 is no exception. The sound is an energized & raw Embrace/G.I./Dag Nasty contraption which comes off nicely, and the lyrics are well done as well. "Under Fire" is the basic plea for individual self-guidance and "Those Homophobic" is condemnation of masculine and religious homophobia. (\$3 to Josh Stanton; Suite 413; 19744 Beach Blvd.; Huntington Beach, CA 92648)

BORN AGAINST - Industrial Relations Dept. 7"

Recalling a style long forgotten, Born Against shed the tame and polished approaches to hardcore and lashout at the beautiful facade of American life with a fury contaminated by an undisguised ugliness. Packaging and music come together well to create their message of raw contempt. As powerful as it gets, though the production lacks. (\$3 to Vermiform Records; PO BOX 1145; Cooper Station; new York, NY 10276) Ignition were dumb....



PAVEMENT - Demolition Plot 7-7"

Coarse concrete jackhammer, living under the train tracks, sleeping on an air strip cars crashing, neighbors t.v. on all night, uninelligible foreign music drifting in the window, tuning the radio, and looking for the aspirin... (Pavement; PO BOX 476867; Chicago, IL 60647)

THE ASTRONAUTS - Constitution 7"

Total pop usually sucks total shit, but this seems to be honest and political and even underground in a similar but less dedicated vein as Chumbawamba, but then again maybe this is shit. You decide. (\$3 to Acid Sings; PO BOX 22; Hitchin; Herts SG4 OHA; England)

NUISANCE - II 7"

Musically, this is really quite good. The style is hard and powerful, with well great singing and a sort of catchy pop semi-punk influence... but why no lyrics? (\$3 to Very Small Records; PO BOX 8223; Emeryville, CA 94662)

SCHLUNG - Limp 7"

Stupidity combined with Victims Familyish quirky jazzy stop-and-go punk funk... Blah. (\$3 to Very Small Records; PO BOX 8223; Emeryville, CA 94662)

TREE PEOPLE - Making The D 7"

Two songs, no inserts, no lyric sheet. Music is sort of thick guitar orientated rock that is reminiscent of almost mainstream sounding college rock. The sound is good and all, but in terms of being a punk record kind of thin and boring. (\$3 to Battery Records; PO BOX 21281; Seattle, WA 98111-3281)

INHUMAN CONDITIONS - Support 7"
Excellent political lyrics covering German reunification, capitalist work ethics, and military protection, accompany fast, driving, powerful hardcore with great singing. Hot! (\$5 to Amok Records; Droske-Hulshoff-Strasse 42; 4709 Bergkamen; W-Germany)

RAID - Words Of War 7"

Musically, Raid play pretty good powerful hardcore with mosh-metal aspects, deep vocals, and monster like choruses. The lyrics are on and off, with their animal rights stances being good, along with a lot of their anti-drug sentiment, especially on political terms, but their promotion of the "War on Drugs" and violence as a solution is extremely weak. Also, "Convenience," which is an anti-abortion tune, is ignorant in its belief that laws can change the situation and lack of compassion for women enslaved by a white male society. It is sad that the lives of the unborn are more important than the lives of the women who must die from these backwards views. And they claim that life is sacred. (\$3.50 to Hardline Records; PO BOX 490; Laguna Beach, CA 92652)

WINTER - Into Darkness CD

Winter is a slow, very slow grindcore metal act that is supposed to have great lyrics, though who would know since there is no lyric sheet. While the style can be annoying, it can also be interesting. Dreary. (Future Shock; 101 Alder Street; Suite 2; West Babylon, NY 11704)

BOLT THROWER - In Battle There Is No Law CD

Solely on a musical level, Bolt Thrower at times plays fucking great grindcore, though the guitar solos suck, and they can be a great listen, but on every other level this is completely stupid crap that isn't worth even a minute amount of attention. In the quest for profit there is no integrity. (Silent Scream)

CANCER - To The Gory End CD

Admittedly, I do in fact enjoy certain aspects of grindcore, but for the most part it's entirely laughable. This is completely laughable. Spare me. (Silent Scream)

HAWKWIND - Space Bandits CD

Horrible. (Road Racer)

CARNAVAL OF SHAME - Go Tell Mother CD

Someone in Carnaval Of Shame has obviously been listening to the Misfits, Samhain, and Danzig because in numerous ways this resembles those efforts. There is no lyric sheet, but the romantic violence, and dark imagery is there. It's a bit scary when it is hard to decide if something is mainstream or alternative or punk, but never-the-less some of this is pretty good, though quite pointless. (Burnin' Records)

KILLING JOKE - Extremities... CD

While not thrilled with the musical style, Killing Joke do churn out some really great lyrics on this new release. It's good to know that they are promoting intelligence, though some of the anti-capitalism rhetoric gets kind of lost when it comes from a profit minded music corporation. (Noise International)

THE DREAD - Six Song demo

To be honest, this is just really forgetable and boring punk rock. The lyrics aren't interesting, and the music isn't thrilling. The live show is even worse. (Dread; 955 Alla Ave.; Concord, CA 94518)

INTEGRITY - Grace Of The Unholy cassette-single

Professional heavy metal with a bit of interesting originality and slick pointless packaging may sound nice and look appealing, but when it is all flash and no substance then it isn't worth much more than the latest disco pop crap being devoured by the mindless masses of MTV morons. No lyric sheet, imagine that. (\$3.50 to Progression Records; 317 Woodbridge Drive; Grand Blanc, MI 48439)

CRANKSHAFT - 7"

Nemesis has been releasing quite a lot of more alternative rock orientated material, and this is no exception. The style has some Fugazi influences, especially in terms of Fugazi feed-back power moments. Babbling lyrics. (Nemesis)

STATEMENT - Prepare For Battle 7"

England's Statement play intense grinding deathcore metal with hard lyrics about animal rights, staying clean from chemicals, and using force if necessary. If they remain free of the conservative, anti-choice, and homophobic Vegan Reich mentality, then Statement are worthy of a listen. (\$3.50 to Hardline Records; PO BOX 490; Laguna Beach, CA 92652)

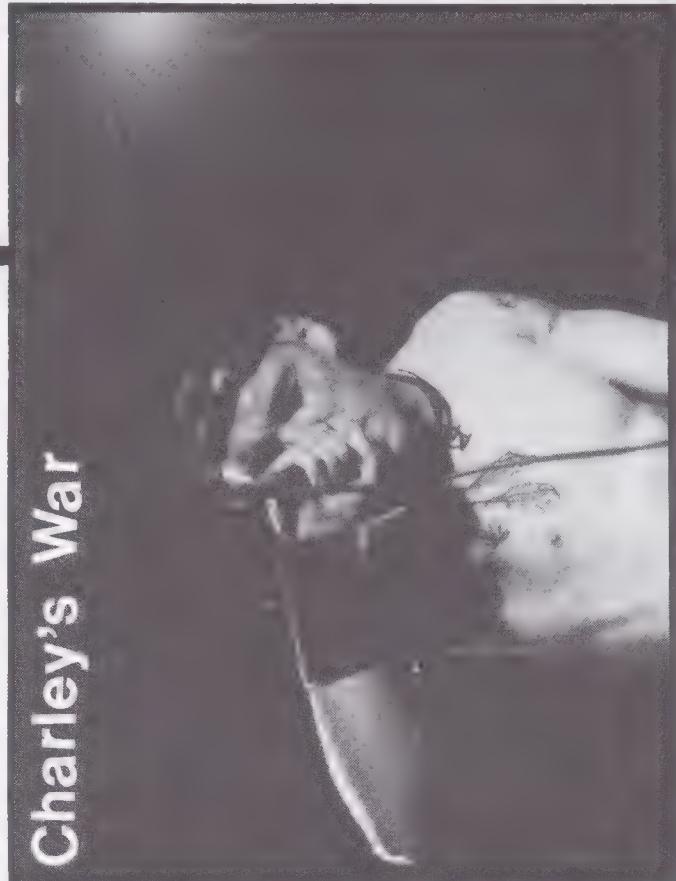


U-Gene's, 11/25/90, photo McClard

PENDULUM - Atrocity Sin demo
Terrible speedmetal crap. They do have a song called "Suck Doom," which is worth a sad laugh. (Pendulum; PO BOX 33401; San Antonio, TX 78265)

MASHPOT - Songs That Bit The Big One demo
Not worth reviewing. (\$2 to 379 Harbor Drive; Cape Canaveral, FL 32920)

Charley's War



Europe, 1990, photo Bodonski

RORSCHACH - Patterns demo
Not to be confused with N.Y.'s Rorschach, this Rorschach play extremely odd music that combines acoustic/classical guitar with straight rock and a million technically proficient musical styles. Strange. The lyrics are excellent, and their attitude is right on. Highly recommended. (\$3 to Rorschach; PO BOX 52004; Philadelphia, PA 19115)

GLOBAL DISROBAL - Death Rattle cassette-single
I'm just going to pretend that this never came. (Global Disrobal; 13 Vivian St.; Lincoln Park, NJ 07035)

OUTRAGE - '91 demo
Undoubtedly they meant well, but the ridiculous full color photos and cheesy music comes off sort of silly, most likely to their dismay, and the lyrics are well intended, but again ridiculous. Try again, maybe? (Outrage; 592 Pomfret Rd.; Putnam, CT 06260)

DRIFT - demo
Guitar dominated, grinding hardcore with gruff vocals and a 'rockin' beat played to lyrics covering personal issues, scene violence, and capital punishment is fine by me, but why the immature sex jokes and phone call pranks at the end of the tape? Putting that aside, these six live songs have good sound quality. (Seth Linstrom; 2603 NE 169th; Seattle, WA 98125)

NO ESCAPE - demo
This is one incredible demo! The lyrics are all worth reading, and the music is very powerful, energetic, and gripping. In some ways No Escape is comparable to a metalized version of Chain of Strength, but much better and much more real. Quite excellent. (\$2 to Irate Records; 3229 West Ave.; Ocean City, NJ 08226)

DOWNSIDE - demo
Musically, Downside play melodic and metallic hardcore that is more pleasant than powerful, but ironically the lyrics fluctuate between tough guy macho revenge stuff and socially relevant thoughtful attitudes. The hard man ego shit is out of place and is the only thing holding them back. (\$3 to Downside; 770 Curfew St.; St. Paul, MN 55114)

MOSH POTATOES - Some Day demo
Quirky comical pop-punk, hardcore with goofy lyrics usually doesn't impress, but this is listenable and the comic elements don't ever become too blatant. No lyric sheet. (Significant Records; 1304 Albany Rd.; Harrisburg, PA 17112)

NEW SCHOOL - demo
Shit! (New School; 67-50 Thornton Pl; Forest Hills, NY 11375)

NATIONS ON FIRE - demo
Sounding similar to early No For An Answer, Nations Of Fire present some powerful and energetic music. Their lyrics deal with vegetarianism, straight edge, and sexism. Great start. (Nations On Fire; PO BOX 90; 8500 Kortrijk; Belgium)

ONLY LIVING WITNESS - demo
This is straight forward metal with political-social lyrics and plenty of guitar wanking. The attitude and message is certainly right on, but the music is personal unbearable, though all-in-all excellent for metal. (\$5 to Only Living Witness; PO BOX 1090; Hudson, NH 03051)

TINY GIANTS - Make Up Your Own Mind demo
With a good solid production, a healthy sound quality, and personal-social lyrics, Europe's Tiny Giants come off nicely. Despite the name, there is not a Verbal Assault influence, but rather an earlier, more traditional hardcore style. Well done. (\$5 to Keep In Touch; PO BOX 6342; 23 Kiel 14; W-Germany)

ASCEND - demo
The Amenity influence is very severe. The chunky music, and deep throaty vocal style, and personal lyrics are all very reminiscent of Amenity. Good job, though may be a bit too similar to Amenity? (\$3 to Ascend; 3051 E. Oregon; Los Angeles, CA 90023)

DEVICE - demo
Device play rockin' punchy hardcore with a sort of moshy guitar sound and good vocals that cover real issues from sort of an abstract perspective. I hope their anti-war sentiment still holds. Definitely cool. (Device; 4 Cromwell Ct.; Newport News, VA 23606)

GAME FACE - demo
This is the Descendents! Game Face play music that is astonishing similar to I Don't Want To Grow Up era Descendents. What more need be said? (Game Face; 317 Ethyl Pl.; Anaheim, CA 92804)

FUSE - demo
The Fuse music is a powerful mix of metal and punk, and in an odd way it seems similar to some Shelter, or Inside Out aspects. This is especially true since there seems to be a subtle Krishna feel to the lyrics, even though the lyrics are quite good. Interesting, indeed. (Fuse; 1705 East-West Highway Ap. # 615; Silver Spring, MD 20910)



Born again as just another mindless product, hyped up as the next big thing

Born Against

...once a vehicle for outrage, now just entertainment packaged tastefully.

This is perhaps the longest interview that has ever appeared within these pages, but Born Against seems worth it. As for an introduction, I give you Sam McPheeter, asshole extraordinaire... — Kent

FUCK ROCK. Fuck cigarettes and slicked back hair that ends in a pony tail and a high door price. Maturity and progression do not mean status quo music and ideals. Under the false pretense of reaching new audiences, former punk bands bring us closer to square one, throwing out the window the foundations of independence which took years to build. This band is an attempt to reinforce those quickly eroding foundations. Maybe these "rock" types don't see it that way, but speaking as someone who has never been lured by the slippery slope of pseudo concerned UPC code post hardcore bullshit, common sense tells me that no matter how many reggae songs you write about human rights, your audience will still "rock out" and drink wine coolers. Then they'll go home and fuck like dogs to your politically concerned kick ass tunes. THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE! — Adam Against

KENT: My first question is, you guys have both the reality and the reputation of bad mouthing a lot of other bands and a lot of other people in the scene, what do you think makes Born Against better than the people and bands that you bad mouth?

ADAM: We're not better than them we just want to call them out on stuff that no one else will. We really don't want people to think that we think we're superior to someone or better than them, but it is just gross when nobody calls out a band on their willingness to self-censor themselves or...

SAM: Punk rock shouldn't be about the kind of comfort of saying "Oh I have these certain friends of mine and I'm not going to criticize them," or "Oh these people are my enemies and they might beat me up if I call them out on this." I think it is very important to constantly maintain that level for stirring up the shit. Adam especially is the one who should take credit for this. He was doing things long before other people in New York, like a lot of the ABC people, like handing out flyers at the...

ADAM: The "Hawker is Hardcore" show.

SAM: That was the thing that started it all. That was it.

ADAM: Let me make it clear that that was only the main thing that started a resurgence of people thinking about big label connections because before me there was... most people haven't even heard of him, but there was a fanzine called State Of Fury done by a guy who was in a band called Urgent Fury and they just got back together, and there was another fanzine called Smash Apathy, and the guy who did that, the first one, Abe, and the other guy, Dan, both did the exact same things that we've been doing lately, but they just didn't get as much attention for it. Dan did for a while. He boycotted the Rock Hotel and the Ritz and Chris Williamson and stuff, and there was a big controversy about it in the letters section in Maximum Rock'n'roll about six years ago. He got thrown up against the wall and threatened by bouncers. Basically it didn't achieve anything except inspiring us because the Ritz still has shows and they (Dan & Abe) have gone away.

SAM: I think it achieved what we achieved in that it made it into an issue, at least partially. Maybe we've been a little more successful at making it effective. We're not trying to organize some kind of boycott of In-Effect or any other label. We're not an anti In-Effect band. I could care fucking less what In-Effect does. I'm going to hassle them as much as I would hassle any other big label.

KENT: On that subject, what is your main beef with a big label?

SAM: With a big label? I think maybe we have been presented as being overly dogmatic. My thing with big labels, I mean there are a couple of different things. Maybe to use In-Effect as an example, and this is only an example, just turning... with them it was specific ways in which they're turning hardcore into a commodity, very specific ways. The whole sloganizing thing, the "harder-than-you" thing I found real disheartening.

ADAM: There are other labels that are doing it too like Caroline with the "On the '90s Tip." It's not even just the slogans, it's the packaging, the loss of control.

SAM: It's the fact that you can't print even the word shit on an In-Effect record. That's obvious, that's obvious stuff. That's not something complex.

ADAM: That's not a lie. You can, but you shouldn't kick the shit of us for saying that you can't print the word shit on your record, although many people would like to kick the shit out of us for bringing up obvious facts like that you can't print the word shit on a record.

SAM: We're not saying anything terribly complex, or Freudian, or out of the world...

ADAM: We're saying stuff that was totally, totally taken for granted in the beginning of '83, I imagine. Even when I came into the scene which was a lot, a while after that, it just didn't seem... even the bands that were on big labels and the bands that seemed to make compromises or be the most popular bands weren't making compromises of that magnitude, they weren't doing things like that.

SAM: And we're not trying to present ourselves again as... we're not saying you can't compromise. Of course not. We're using vinyl that's made out of petroleum that the U.S. is going to go fight for, and, oh yes, we use Con Edison's energy as pointed out by a couple of brain surgeons in New York. It is so fucking obvious, you have to make compromises if you're going to be in a band. If you're going to be a radical environmentalist I would strongly suggest that you don't go into the business of putting out records because there are many things you are going to have to compromise on, but at least you don't have to compromise your message to the pathetic sad state were you can't print the word "shit" on your own records.

ADAM: Just by the fact that you've been born into this society, in some



Kinko's Copic Shop 1/6/91, photo McClint

sort of way you're sort of obligated to at least function or live in society, but nobody forces you to join a hardcore band or put out a record. So you might as well do it right if you're going to do it. And all these people saying to us "Oh you might as well become a bunch of fucking hermits and move to the woods," I mean to argue against a totally moronic argument, if we all moved to the woods there would be no more woods and then we couldn't be hermits and we would all build a city in the woods.

SAM: And most importantly the sole fucking reason we appear as people that talk shit about every single band in the world is because no one else is willing to call out their friends or their enemies on the really important stuff.



The vast majority of most hardcore punk bands are too fucking chicken shit to call out record labels on the crap that they do in call out...

JON: Even to the point of just buying bad records.

ADAM: Not by name but what do you mean by the action of that?

JON: People are just blindly buying up...

ADAM: Consumption.

SAM: Of course we're not anti-money. I've heard that thrown at us. "Der, we're anti-money." Alright, okay, thank you. We are, I am anti being a good consumer. I'm not going to be a good consumer. I'm not going to be a good fucking consumer that goes to the mall and buys my fucking street mosh record. I'm sorry, that's not what I got into punk rock for.

ADAM: And there is a difference between, like I heard people say "Well hey, I saw the Life's Blood record at a mall," the point isn't that the Life's Blood record was at a mall, and that the Killing Time record was at a mall too, and that makes me a hypocrite because I was in Life's Blood. It doesn't because Combined Effort and Life's Blood were controlled by no one, and the money... we know exactly where almost all the money went except for whatever sleazy money Important took for it. It's just a totally different thing for people to say to us that when we personally go out and sell our stuff and have it under our own control

that it is the same thing as selling your record by being on a major label and going through a major distributor. It just doesn't make sense.

SAM: I think it is important that hardcore becomes more of a threat and less of a commodity.

KENT: But a lot of people argue that by staying away from the larger labels you remain very small and underground and therefore you never really become a threat.

SAM: You have to work at it. No one is going to fucking hand it to you, I mean, yes, people will hand it to you like large labels. If you're going to do it yourself, as we're learning right now, it takes a lot of fucking work. I put a lot of time on starting my own label, Vermiform Records. It's no easy thing, but...

ADAM: But also, like in Dan O'Mahony's column in a couple of Maximum Rock'n'rolls ago he says that "maybe we can break into the market with hardcore if we put enough great hardcore records out on major labels." And I just... that's like totally backwards, it's so backwards I can't believe it. What we should be doing is building an alternative to challenge it. Something that is as powerful or more powerful, and it is never going to become that way if everybody thinks that you have to get on a major label and kiss their ass to... I mean you can't rip it down and build it up at the same time.

SAM: And that just shows you how dogmatic we are because four of us are staying at Dan's house, well not tonight but tomorrow.

ADAM: We like Dan, I mean it's not something I haven't brought up with Dan. We're not talking shit because I drove No For An Answer around the weekend they played the "Hawker Is Not Hardcore" show, and I handed him the flyer before Laurent and handed it out to John Bello and Wrecking Crew and stuff.

SAM: They were staying at my apartment around the corner.

KENT: What about... Dan doesn't like to play small shows

because he doesn't feel like he is reaching enough people...

SAM: I don't want to get into too much of his ethics because that's not... that's Dan.

A D A M : We like small shows because we think there are less assholes there usually.

SAM: I had a fucking wonderful time today at the Barn and last night in a kid's garage. It was fucking wonderful.

A D A M : Yeah, the kid who put on the show in this garage in San Diego was like "I'm

really sorry



this is in a garage and stuff." Look we played to more people than we've almost ever played to before.

SAM: We got paid sixty bucks at that garage which is more than we've

ever been payed for a show in New York.

ADAM: We've only been payed more than that once. ABC NO RIO... if you're a local band... it's very important to pay the touring bands a lot of money, so since we all live like a subway ride away.

JAVIER: What's the most we got payed, at Catina's in Massachusetts?

ADAM: Yeah, we got payed a 100 dollars there and they apologized to us too.

KENT: Is there any kind of door price that you feel is a reasonable type thing?

JAVIER: We always like to play the five dollar thing if we can.

ADAM: I don't know, we haven't had a real band conference about it but unless it was like thirty-five bands and like a two weekend thing then I wouldn't want it to be... like the Rock Against Racism thing was like thirty bands and all you can eat and they had accommodations and that was like fifteen dollars.

SAM: That was up in Canada in Ontario in Ottawa.

KENT: Didn't you do one of your War Prayer things about that?

ADAM: Oh that was in Mind Set. It wasn't any kind of attack on the Rock Against Racism show, that was an attack on New York attitudes again.

SAM: Us always the shit talkers, ha ha.

ADAM: Those people in Canada were making do with what they could get and ten people can only do so much.

JAVIER: They tried their best and everything, but it just didn't work out.

ADAM: There were only a few people and they were trying to organize a huge event and the enthusiasm was just lame.

KENT: What was your big beef with Nausea on that whole thing?

ADAM: Well we've talked to Al, and I had a really long talk with Al just recently. It was just basically something that I made a big deal out of, well Sam too, we just didn't get why there record said "pay no more than \$9." We just didn't understand why it didn't just say "pay no more than \$100."

SAM: I haven't talked to Al, I haven't talked to anyone.

ADAM: What it comes down to is... we've exchanged letters with Profane Existence, we've been on the phone with Profane Existence, I had probably an hour long conversation with Al about it. It just comes down to, we're on the same side and it is just a difference of opinion, and the record doesn't usually get sold for that... I guess it really just turns into semantics because it is just something written on the record and it doesn't really get sold for that.

SAM: That was another case where people have just been flabbergasted that we criticized them because we're friends with them, but whatever, if you do something that I disagree with then I'm at least going to ask you about it. I did ask one of the members of Nausea beforehand and he just got pissed so Adam wound up doing it in a more public way. We don't have any hatred of Nausea, they're our friends.

ADAM: We don't have any hatred of the A'ley Way bands. When we were at the peak of all that stuff of supposedly so-and-so is going to kick your ass I called Anthony, the singer of Killing Time, and I had been friends with him for three years before that. He was totally civil with me and asked me how school was going, where you living now, and stuff like that. I was civil with him. I don't know, we don't have vendettas because we hate people, we just see things that are fucked up, we're not like nasty people.

SAM: I don't go out of my way to be an asshole to anyone, but it is extremely important to call people out on stuff. It's of utmost importance in an independent scene to maintain that attitude of constant upheaval.

ADAM: Also, you got to remember we're not one big happy family. That's just stupid. I don't think we should ever strive to be one big happy family, this scene united, or anything like that. Everyone should complain if there is a problem, and people say "oh you wouldn't like it if it was on the other foot." That's a bunch of bull shit because I've had kids become decent friends of mine, who I met because they did like a totally shitty review of Life's Blood. "Oh yeah, you're the one who said we're a total Void ripoff," and I became friends with the kid and he's like "I'm really sorry, I didn't mean to write that bad review." I would much rather see an honest bad review than one that's like "this is a good record, it's got that New York sound."

SAM: I don't want to be involved in some sort of scene or sub-culture where everyone is friends with everyone else and there's no possible chance for change or anything. That's fucking mainstream garbage. That's the cover of the Insted record. That's that kind of attitude.

ADAM: The first one, Bonds Of Friendship.

SAM: Yeah, because the second one rules [sarcasm], oh there I am talking shit about a band again. I just don't want to be involved with anything where there is no criticism, where there is no chance of challenge or...

ADAM: Our real friends tell us if we totally bit the big one when we play and stuff. Like some of our friends said that we shouldn't even put out the record, the 7" that we put out, "Oh I don't know, that 7" sounds terrible, you shouldn't put it out." They're still our friends, they're our great friends.

SAM: We've sucked live in such an incredibly big way at times. Up in Canada, god I wouldn't even have wanted to... I think we were the worst band ever in Canada. I've never seen a band as bad as we were at that show.

JAVIER: It was because Sam wore a dress.

San Francisco, 1/12/91, photo McClard



SAM: Yeah, it was because I wore a dress, that was the main reason.

KENT: Didn't you have some debate with In-Effect on some radio station?

ADAM: That was more like people as representatives of entities, like Charles who does Mind Set and sings for Rorschach, and me because I'm a big mouth, and Sam because of Vermiform and Dear Jesus, and we've

basically covered it before, but all I would like to say is...

KENT: Who was it with?

SAM: It was the three of us versus Pete and Lou from Sick Of It All and Steve Martin from In-Effect.

ADAM: And it was supposedly mediated by Marlene, who is a DJ for Crucial Chaos which is a hardcore show, and Sam Evac from Evacuate Records. They didn't really mediate. The only problem to me was, and we've said it in interviews before, we thought there was going to be a certain common plane that we were both going to be approaching the problem on, and the problem was in the middle of whether they were just commercial garbage or not, whether they were bending to the powers that be or whether they were, you know, a great rock band, and we weren't on the same plane. We were trying to approach it from... "Okay, now go ahead and try to justify yourself based on the hardcore do-it-yourself ethic," and they were like "No, fuck that. This is our job. This is rock and roll, this is the business, this is what I'm going to do for my life." So it was just out the window before we started. We didn't realize that they weren't talking about the same kind of hardcore we were talking about. Hardcore as defined by Pete and kick my ass if you will, but this is just a quote, "Hardcore is about being hard, it's about kicking some ass." So that's hardcore alright, that's why the debate didn't work. They yelled and we tried to talk. We looked like total assholes. We brought notes.

SAM: Actually we didn't bring notes, we brought fanzines.

ADAM: Yeah, I brought fanzines with like stuff highlighted... we looked like idiots.

The Red Rum, 1/5/91, photo McClard



SAM: Yeah, I'm glad we did it, but it was stupid. I'm not going to attempt any more dialogues with people. I'm just going to continue on with my business.

ADAM: Well, it depends on what the situation is because it should go on.

SAM: And also the most important way for us to combat what we see wrong with the major label thing is by building up our own label and that's what I'm putting most of my energy into right now.

KENT: There's always a lot of criticism of other bands and stuff, but do you think that any kind of hardcore is really doing anything?

SAM: I don't understand the question.

KENT: Well you always find bands saying that what other bands are doing is not legitimate as hardcore, but is there any hardcore that is

legitimate as some kind of... as more than simply music?

ADAM: I think so. It sounds stupid, but when I was in high school and suburbia if I didn't stumble across hardcore I might be dead right now. So many people, I know I have friends that... if we didn't have hardcore we would just be like total fucking wash-ups, total losers. We would be in drug rehab with our friends or living with our mothers or working in a gas station or dead...

SAM: Or both.

ADAM: It just in a sense that it has saved the total suburban white kid.

SAM: A lot of people don't seem to realize that the medium for a large part is the message, and this is a very ugly form of music or at least it should be. A lot of so called hardcore bands are nothing more than dressed up metal bands or a sub-genre of metal. I mean this is a very ugly form of music, and I think, I mean are you talking about specific bands?

KENT: No not in specific, just in general.

ADAM: Do you think it has the potential...

KENT: Does it have any potential to do anything?

SAM: I think it has a lot of potential, but maybe not in the common sense. I don't think it has the potential in the grand sense of changing things immediately. Someone talked to us in an interview and said "Don't you think there is going to be a revolution soon?" I don't think there is going to be a revolution in the common sense, but hardcore is in and of itself revolutionary in that it is extremely ugly, it will forever remain non-mainstream...

ADAM: Well, it's not very ugly right now. Born Against might be ugly, and like maybe Econochrist or Neanderthal or something, but it's not ugly music always.

SAM: The point is, go to a friend's house where their parents are very normal and say "Listen, I have this tape of some really ugly music that I would like to play for you," put it on the stereo and they're going to get upset, and they're going to tell you to turn it off, and that is a good thing because you're challenging something that...

ADAM: And that's fun. You're not even really challenging, you're just pissing them off and you're having fun.

KENT: When you're talking about ugly music, it seems like... I end up thinking of the whole grind core thing and that seems to me to be the most non-productive cliquish little sub-genre of nothing that they're just so...

ADAM: We're not talking about that when we say hardcore.

KENT: I understand what you're saying, but they play the ugliest music that is being played right now and I think it is totally irrelevant to anything.

ADAM: But by ugly we mean flying in the face of...

SAM: Ugly as unacceptable, ugly as in you can't dance to it, which is why as much as I like... say for example... I hate to use examples because then we get accused of talking shit, but as much as I really admire Fugazi's stances on a lot of stuff, I don't dig their music. You know why? Because you can go to a college dorm room, pop it into the tape deck and people will dance to it, and I don't consider that extremely challenging or threatening because you can fucking be-bop around the room to it.

ADAM: But then again, I kind of do like some Fugazi.

SAM: Oh, and I shouldn't even say that because I fucking totally dig some Fugazi.

ADAM: "Dig?" Is that the new thing now?

SAM: P.S. Fuck you.

JAVIER: But go to the same room and play Napalm Death and you'll get thrown out.

SAM: And that's good because it disturbs these people. It doesn't fit into their fucking frame work. The parents of some of the people in Rorschach took one look at the fucking front and back cover of that record and they were like "What in the hell is going on here?" They couldn't even understand it, it was beyond there point of reference.

ADAM: I think back to when I brought *In God We Trust, Inc.* and a Suicidal Tendencies album home and showed them to my mom...

JAVIER: Try telling my mom I'm in a band called Born Against.

KENT: But does shock for shock's effect mean anything? Isn't there a lot more effective things to do?

JON: Enough of the time it leads to a deeper appreciation. That one percent says "Hey, what's this?" That's the people we're hanging around with, going to shows with.

SAM: Shock shouldn't be used as a means to its own end. John who is our roadie on this thing was in a band called Twenty-Seven Mutilated Homosexual Babies and I'm sure if you gave their demo to an adult they would go "Hey, what is this?" That doesn't really accomplish much because that's where it's effectiveness ends. It's shocking once and then it gets thrown in the trash.

ADAM: That's the example of shock that's dog shit.

SAM: Pick up a Born Against record and we have a picture of a woman in bondage right next to a picture of *lionskey* in a restraining device as a means to communicate a message, not because it is an ugly brutal picture, or a set of pictures—it is—but because it would also hopefully lead to a deeper investigation of why those two pictures are next to each other. "Gee, why would someone put a picture of a woman in bondage next to an animal in bondage? What's the connection?" That is what we are trying to achieve and I think in that case shock is very effective.

KENT: This is kind of changing the subject drastically, but since you bring that up, do you think there are a lot of connections between animal rights and sexism?

SAM: Totally. Adam's the best one to talk about that.

ADAM: Well, I didn't really think about it until I read a flyer that I got from a N.O.W. chapter from a group that I think is from San Francisco or Berkeley called Feminists For Animal Rights. All you really have to think of is what are women called that is derogatory? Every derogatory name for a female is an animal, and it is derogatory because you are calling them an animal, which implies that the animal is an inferior piece of shit.

SAM: You're lower than the white male.

ADAM: There's just like outrageous connections between sexism and speciesism, like I was paging through *Sport's Illustrated* and I saw this thing about a rodeo where you knock down a calf and put

women's underwear on it. And it is pretty much of a chuckle, but there is really something there. There is something in people's psyche of male domination that makes them do that besides the fact that it is just wacky. There really is something there for why people are doing things like that. Just anywhere you go, I wish I could think of some more right now, but there are so many gross examples like that.

SAM: I'm reading a book by Andrea Dworkin called *Pornography*, and she has a long thing about a picture she came across looking through a Hustler magazine of two guys in a pick-up truck with a woman spread eagle on the front naked, and they both have shotguns, and she's tied to the front and the caption reads "Beaver hunters." That says it right there. One of the reasons that we're trying to point this out is because there is this new slew of people, some of them associated with this Hard Line thing, and others just acting independently, who are real into the whole veganism thing and who are really into straight edge, but abortion is murder and you can't be a faggot and all of this stuff. They don't make the most fundamental connections, and I think it is really tragic that people who have gotten to the point where they are interested in veganism and not exploiting animals aren't also making those same connections about the exploitation of women. Read through the Hard Line statement, I'm not talking about the band statement, I'm talking about the political statement as drafted by this Sean from Vegan Reich. It's full of little things like that. You know, man's mission, and sexual deviants, and it's scary and frightening and sad at the very same time that something which had the potential... people that apparently have the drive to be so motivated as to alienate themselves from 99% of the hardcore scene can't make the simple fucking connection that all these things are connected, and that yes, a woman does in fact have the right, the very simple right to control her own fucking body, to have control over her own womb, and this is connected to the fact that an animal raised, a veal calf that was factory farmed doesn't have the right to its own life. It's all part of the same big fucking mess.

ADAM: Although, I wouldn't want to give any of those fore mentioned bands or people much credit for being anything real at all because they don't play any shows...

SAM: And in six months they're going to be back driving their Cameros.

ADAM: No body knows who are in those bands, they've been around forever and no one cares about them. I just hope that no one ever does care about them, and if you read some of their warrior-learn-a-martial-art-use-plastic-explosives stuff they just reveal their past. They're all Dungeon And Dragons freaks or something. That's not real. It's like that Husker

Du song "Real World." That's just not real people stuff, and they're not going to do it, they don't do it.

SAM: This isn't to discredit groups like the A.L.F., there are real people doing stuff extremely dangerous, putting themselves on the line.

ADAM: But they're not Sean Vegan Reich. Anyone with a brain in their head, anyone who has read a paragraph about the A.L.F. knows that someone who is in the A.L.F., someone that even knows someone who has done something for the A.L.F. doesn't fucking speak a word about it in their fucking entire life or the C.I.A. will be monitoring them, and there will be all kinds of people monitoring them and it will be the end of their freedom as they know it. You do not make flyers about blowing things up.

SAM: If you're doing the real shit and you're not careful about it then you're going to end up in prison for a long time. I've seen a lot of pamphlets in New York about how to blow up a Shell station. First of all the people handing out these pamphlets, as much as they are friends of mine and good people, and this is not in anyway a slag on the peace punk scene in New York because there are great wonderful people involved in that, but no one is going to be blowing up a Shell station...

ADAM: If they do it is cool but...

SAM: And if any of these people are going to blow up a Shell station and they advertise it then they are going to get thrown in jail for a very long time and they won't be doing anything else but eating jello on Sundays and mash potatoes on Thursdays and living up to the strict jail regimen, and we'll bring 'em new 7"s and come visit them on Sundays.

KENT: Back to the issue of abortion, how would you counter that argument, like Vegan Reich's argument is simply that you have this care for life... how do you define is as not being murder? In your mind how have you decided that a fetus is not a living being?

ADAM: We don't decide, it's my girlfriend's and my mother's and his mother's and his sister's decision.

SAM: Yeah, first of all, I don't think it is an issue to be quarreled over by white male's alone, and that's not to say that we don't have some hand in it, but primarily it's not our issue.

KENT: But couldn't you then extend that to like a one year old? What's the difference between...

SAM: The difference is that no one has the right to appropriate any one else's body, and as far as you go there is no legal precedent in this country or any other country for someone to use someone else's body. You can't use someone else's liver if your liver is in trouble. I'm sorry no judge in the United States of America is going to let it happen, and if you're a fetus great then you will evolve into a human being, wonderful, good luck, but you don't have the right to use your mother's body if she doesn't want you in there. That's the bottom line. Also where do you draw the line? Do you draw the line at pre-conception? There are a lot of slippery slopes that get crossed extremely quickly by the people of the conservative ilk, do you ban contraceptives in the U.S.? Ban dating? I mean...

ADAM: Yeah, a lot of people who are conservative... this doesn't really answer your question about where we stand, but a lot of people that are conservative or even just people that are against abortion are against birth control because they think that that is the same as abortion, and especially the pill because they say you are aborting the egg or just not letting it implant in the wall, or they are against the I.U.D. because it does the same thing. They don't offer any solutions except like castration or chastity belts.

SAM: Or don't be promiscuous, okay, great, that's really good advice... [sarcastic] I can understand where some of these people come from, partially because I used to definitely be pretty anti-choice, definitely not as publicly vocal as I am pro-choice now. I understand those connections, but what it comes down to is the fact that if the fetus is a life then what about the woman? Is she a human being, too? I think if a lot of these people examined their values they're going to find that they're not according a woman even her simple right to be a human being.

ADAM: Also, something that is really important that I have talked about with my girlfriend, and with other women too, is that males, to stereotype

for a second, are being objective, and scientific, and philosophical and all this crap, but it's a totally emotionally charged... It's more of an emotional issue for a woman than we could ever imagine, to decide whether there is this thing growing inside you that may have some capacity for life, whether to get rid of it or not... I don't know. It is just so beyond our comprehension. I think it is wise of us to accept the fact that it is so beyond our comprehension, just like i think it is wise of us to accept that there are no answers as far as like Krishna being a big snake with six arms and a woman's head and a green dress, and Jesus being up on a cross with a beard and blue eyes and stuff... We can't hold on to all of these absolutes. I think it would be really intelligent of us as people, as males we will never know or we will never be able to come up for the right answer for that, and humans in this physical world we will never really be able to come up with the real answer for all these silly questions that Krishnas and... well they're not silly questions, but silly answers that Krishnas, Christians, and Mormons come up with.

KENT: On the Krishna subject, from your position how do you think it is justified that you can say that someone is dead because they have joined the Krishnas?

SAM: The song is really metaphorical.

The Red Barn, 1/5/91, photo McClard

KENT: I understand that it is metaphorical, but I think it goes deeper than that.

SAM: The guy who the song was written about, you're talking about "Eulogy," Steve Reddy wrote me a letter, and I haven't answered it, I just have it lumped in a big pile of mail, and I don't know what the fuck I'm going to say to him. He said, "Hey look I'm still alive." and he sent a little picture of him feeding this farm. Great, wonderful, but

I have all the values

that he has and I

didn't have to sur-

render myself to

some higher power,

or pray someone else's

words, or go through the

rules... you got to wear the

beads and you got to do

this and that... it's just a

metaphor, he's still alive.

Also I think he is going

to be out of it in a few years.

I know very few Krishna people

that have stuck with it just be-

cause the simple fact that you get too

fucking...

ADAM: Because they're hardcore kids. They're all confused.

SAM: Yeah, and also it takes a massive amount of energy to adapt your psyche to this rigid ideology, to fit your mind to this ideology. Sooner or latter you're just going to run out of that energy and you're going to say, "Fuck it, I can't deal with this anymore."

ADAM: We're not saying that we have the answers, we're saying that we're totally confused, but when they're saying that they have the answers we're saying bull shit you're confused too.

SAM: I don't consider myself, we've been tagged as atheists, I don't consider myself an atheist.

ADAM: I'm not either.

SAM: I'm not so stupid enough to say I have the answers. Other bands have said it better than us... if you love god then burn a church and offend preachers with your nasty records.

KENT: Going back to the whole major label thing, what do you think about the fact that Dischord made something like \$90,000 last year?

SAM: Great.

KENT: You think it's great?

SAM: More power to them.

ADAM: Thumbs up.

SAM: Money is a good thing, make lots of money, know how to do it well, don't fuck over other people to survive as Seth Tobocman wisely put it. You don't have to screw over other people to make money.

ADAM: That's like the most beautiful example of it ever.

SAM: Dischord is number one example. They are doing it right. They're making good bucks doing good things. More power to them, hallelujah, that's it right there.

ADAM: Like when we did our debate Steve Martin said to me, "Yeah I remember a Life's Blood interview you said Fugazi sucks, well you're singing their praises now." Well, whether I like Fugazi, or Fire Party or the repressed Grey Matter album... it's like so irrelevant. That's missing the point, but his point was that I'm a back stabber and that I'll just use anything to further my point.

SAM: We're all cry baby bed wetters as was quoted in Village Noize. Make lots of money doing good things and then put it right back into doing good things.

ADAM: I go to see bands that do good things, that I don't even like the music of.

SAM: You know I plan on making lots of money with Vermiform Records, the only thing I'm going to do with it is put...

ADAM: That sounds a little crass, we don't know if this stuff is going to sell at all.

SAM: Okay, but assuming that I do make lots of money with Vermiform Records then I'm going to put it right back into helping more people with their bands and putting out good music and hoping possibly to break our scene, especially in New York, out of this stagnant fucking cesspool that it has been in for the last four years. And that is why I would like

to be your next Mayor, thank you.

KENT: On the whole, I don't know if I really want to go into it but



what the hell, on the whole subject of the Mid-East crisis, a lot of hardcore people have been talking about the draft, do you really think that that is any kind of reality?

SAM: I didn't until I went up to up-state New York where my parents live, I'm visiting my Dad, sitting down having dinner, he said "So what are you going to do?" I said "Oh, well, I don't really know yet, you know, hopefully it won't come to that. I don't think it will come to that... I think something bad is going to happen, but I don't think it will involve them calling up a draft because that would be too politically unstable..."

KENT: But not even that, do you even think that something could last that long?

SAM: It might. The thing that I hadn't even thought of that my Dad brought up...

ADAM: Even during the height of the Cold War that I lived through, that I can remember, from like maybe '79 to whatever '85 or '86, I never heard some of the talk that you're hearing now. I mean maybe in three months when this is all over we're going to laugh about this and think I was a paranoid idiot, but I never heard terms and euphemisms like weapons of mass destruction, and we all know what they mean, that are being used by Saddam Hussein and George Bush, and if you ever saw this movie called "Threads" made by the B.B.C., it's like the same exact situation.

KENT: But isn't it the fact that they have said that, I mean over December Cheney said that they would use nuclear weapons if Hussein uses chemical weapons, and if they are going to do that then it won't even last more than a few days.

SAM: Well, what my Dad brought up is that as other parties get involved, specifically Israel... Israel is one of the most crazy-fucked up racist countries in the world, fucking bonkers, off the wall, they've got a hundred to two-hundred nuclear weapons, and once they get involved with this with either troops or nuclear weapons...

ADAM: The first thing they say is that is Saddam Hussein finds out that the U.S. is taking any military action, a lot of people theorize that the first thing he is going to do is launch everything he can at Israel to bring in all the Arab people who are supposedly United States allies on the side of Iraq because the war will then be against Israel too.

SAM: And yes, I could definitely see a situation in which those weapons were used in which it was also prolonged in which we just sent troops out to a fucking bombed out dessert to keep going at it.

ADAM: Yeah, and who knows what the future holds, maybe there will be a war fought with battlefield nuclear weapons that is contained and is just really horrible.

SAM: The United States has small megaton weapons that can be carried by one individual or a group of individuals, and also weapons that can be carried in vehicles that could destroy only part of a town, they would still be atomic, still produce fallout. The other thing that has to be remembered is that the United States fights it's war according to the last war, and we're planning on this war according to the doctrines of the Vietnam War and World War II because they... the Vietnam War we can't play up too much because we got our ass kicked in that one by the "little gooks" over there, but anything could happen that the U.S. won't be prepared for because they haven't fought a war in the dessert, at least not in this century.

ADAM: Yes they have, in World War II in North Africa.

SAM: Okay I apologize, but anyway we aren't prepared for this kind of situation, and there are a million variables which could come up that would throw us totally off, and U.S. forces have even admitted that they don't know what the fuck is going to happen. One of the big wigs over there, General What's-His-Fucking...

ADAM: Joe Smith.

SAM: Yeah, Joe Smith, he was given the boot because he publicly stated that he didn't know what the fuck was going to happen if x and x and x happens, and when you've got variables like that, plus the fact that you've got nuclear and chemical and I would assume biological, which is probably one of the scariest things of all because you can't control the spread of that.

ADAM: Hey, one spoonful of botulism is enough to kill the entire planet. Pure botulism.

SAM: Although I don't think we have to worry about that because I think Hussein has proven himself stable enough that he wouldn't introduce that, I mean like it is obvious, if he's done everything else that he has already done, all these horrible atrocities which, yes, were very bad but were also in part U.S. engineered then who's to say that if he got his hand on some new fucking horrible weapon and if he was held up in his palace in Baghdad or his office or whatever, his corporate headquarters in Baghdad or whatever and he knew he was going to get the fucking shit blown out of him in twenty-four hours anyway, who's to say he wouldn't loose

salmonella Strain 31B on the rest of the human population, and a year latter we would have five billion human corpses laying around the planet. There's a million things that could happen. And I really hope that we're reading issue #10 of *No Answers* a year from now and laughing about this, I really hope that, but as far as a draft goes, I don't think it is all that possible, but after my Dad sort of talked to me about this I've been thinking about it a lot more. A lot of things are possible.

ADAM: All we can say is that every single person we know isn't going which is a good thing. Like no matter what, I mean every single person that I know, that I hang around with that I consider a human being isn't going no matter what.

SAM: In a way it's good that this whole thing has dragged out as long as it has because it has given the organized left a lot more opportunity to stage a...

ADAM: There is no organized left.

SAM: Yeah, you're right, I shouldn't say that. The *de-organized* left, it's given them a chance...

ADAM: There isn't even a left. There isn't one.

SAM: The splinter-fucks, it's given them a chance to at least



Kinko's Copie Shop, 1/6/91, photo McClard

show some sort of dissent at this.

ADAM: A wimpy ass version of dissent, there isn't any.

SAM: Part of this is that none of us were expecting this, we were all expecting a war in Latin America, I was totally expecting that. And sure this has thrown us all for a loop.

ADAM: People don't care because it takes about how long would it take? It would take about five days, less than that... for people to organize a massive protest if everybody wanted to go, but nobody wants to go.

SAM: And the first one in New York was really bogus. There were a lot

of fucked up things that happened. It took them two and a half months to organize it.

ADAM: Even in animal rights, a protest that I was going to two years ago was attended by six thousand people, this year it was attended by less than two thousand people.

SAM: It is very hard to maintain a level of commitment, and we're totally included in that. It's hard to keep up the good work providing your dissent, and if you slip then the fuckers will call you on it. There used to be a series of fur ads in New York about a year ago that were on the defensive. There was one fur ad in the New York Times that was how to answer people when they insulted you for wearing a fur coat...

ADAM: And this year the ad is "Fur is the fashion of choice." It's on the sides of all the buses. Instead of like answers for people that heckle you this year the ad says "I love furs. My neighbor got one, and now I have one too," and then there is another quote, "Tom got one for Judy, so I got one for Rose."

SAM: And it is because less and less people are calling them on it.

KENT: Do you think that there will ever be a left in the U.S. that isn't just a lesser shade of conservative?

SAM: I wouldn't make any grand predictions for the next ten years, but of course history moves in huge surges and what maybe left in a hundred years maybe totally alien to us. It may deal with issues that we have not even the smallest conception of.

ADAM: It's kind of weird because the definition of a liberal as the people who coined the phrase meant it is pretty divorced from what you call a liberal now, so maybe in a hundred years from now what the left wing will be may be totally bizarre.

SAM: Good example, in the post new revolution Soviet Union they use the term left and right in the exact opposite way that we would use left and right.

ADAM: Because the left is the government.

SAM: And yeah, the left is the government over there, and I think the terms are very vague...

ADAM: I don't think that any of us are politically educated enough to ever make a prediction.

SAM: In terms of there being an organized resistance to the establishment, I think that will come again, probably not in the next ten years. My prediction for the '90s is that it is going to be a big fucking rehash of all the same diarrhea that we were feed in the '80s, only much more cleaned up, much more homogenized. That's already going on right now, you've got Vanilla Ice the new rap. Rap is no longer dangerous. You've got the new disco which is every single fucking pop band. You've got the new hardcore, every fucking little tiny cleaned up straight edge band that doesn't really want to sing about political issues. They want to sing about friendship and how committed they are to ideals. Think about the generic thrash bands of 1984, all those bands we're singing "fuck Reagan," and everyone was going "Oh, it's so generic," but that's the point. That genericism was a wonderful refreshing thing when you consider the fact that there were no pop musicians singing "fuck Reagan," the pop musicians were singing "Now look at me wagging my penis," or "Look at me swing

my breasts to the beat of the music." Blah, blah, blah...

ADAM: You haven't had much to say tonight.

SAM: I forgot what I was going to say. Hi, I'm Sam. I'm the singer.

KENT: Um, I'm kind of curious because you make a lot of derogatory statements about straight edge bands, but it seems to me that you hold a lot of those same ideals?

ADAM: Totally, but I don't know if we will ever sing about it, and it's not really the main thing of the band.

It's totally generic what I'm about to say here because every single band who isn't straight edge says it, but not everyone in the band is straight edge and nobody in the band abuses drugs...

SAM: We've had problems with members who were doing some serious shit like sniffing glue.

ADAM: Not serious, just silly.

SAM: I would consider sniffing glue pretty apocryphal.

ADAM: It's self-destructive, but it is just silly. But anyway, the only way that we like to look at it is in an extremely political, far reaching political sense. Like everybody at ABC NO RIO had a big discussion with Dave M.D.C. about it. It was really cool. We were saying "Why do you say fuck rock'n'roll, why do you say don't eat meat, don't dehumanize people, but then you say yeah, smoke a little spliff? Because you say the government fed you all those other things, but you then decide arbitrarily that the government didn't feed you the idea to go smoke a little spliff, and that the government didn't sell you that little spliff, and that the government isn't killing people for it." The conversation just meandered with him saying the same thing and us saying the same thing. I think he is a totally cool guy. He changed my life with some of those records, so I'm not trying to criticize M.D.C., I'm just trying to make an example of the way a lot of people that I'm friends with think about drugs and alcohol, and they acknowledge the fact that it is state sponsored destruction and control of people.

SAM: There is a heavy political element to it that took me a really long time to pick up on. I've never had, I mean like I had a sip of my Dad's beer when I was

six, but I've never smoked cigarettes, never taken drugs, never drank any beer, never had any coffee, I was never into it. And right before I got into hardcore, you know when I was like fourteen I was starting to wonder what the fuck is the matter with me, and then I got into hardcore and it was like "Great, I have a gang of people that accept me and I can fit in with them, and this is what I'm going to be." And for awhile I was, I'd say militant asshole about it, except that I was in a place in up-state New York where there wasn't enough of anything going on to be really militant about, but were I in New York I would have hooked up with all the people who were really militantly assholish about it, and it took me awhile to pick up on the political context to it, but I'm still totally straight and I have lots of friends who drink and do drugs, and the main thing that gets me about it, especially the peace punk people in New York, they don't make the connection that their fucking weed is grown by the... whoever, the fucking Contras down there raping and killing people.

ADAM: Especially with pot you can't always say that.

SAM: Yeah, I can't totally say that with pot.

KENT: Ahh, so much of it is imported from Third World countries, I mean probably 85% of it.

ADAM: There was a thing that really disturbed the hell out of me that I saw on a news magazine show called 48 Hours about all these people in Appalachia and Arkansas and stuff, like Ministers and old women growing it in their back yard, and people like the hippies up in Northern California, and I guess they were cutting into the profits of the government or

somebody in the mafia or somebody really powerful, and so they were knocking out their livelihood and these people were like "Well, I guess it's going to be a lean Christmas this year." I feel terrible for those people, and I say to those people, "If you can get away with it then grow twenty acres of pot and go sell it and have a great Christmas," because those people have been fucked so hard. That's the only thing they can do. And the same thing, depending on who they are going to go sell it to, I would say the same thing to the fucking street urchin crack dealer, but I don't know... I would rather not talk about it, in terms of the band, in such personal terms as when I was fourteen I did this and that because I'm not really sure...

SAM: When we were in Canada me and Adam played with big fat "X's" on our hands solely for the purpose of pissing off all the political minded peace punk people up there, because we knew it was such an easy thing, if we got up on stage and talked about rape, and talked about war, and everything else then they were going to go "Yeah, right on" and wave their giant 40 ounces at us, but me and Adam got up there with our big fat Youth Of Today "X's" on our hands and went "Fuck drugs" and they went "Yeah, fuck you." I don't think we are going to be playing too many more shows with "X's" on our hands just because it is so mindlessly pathetic, but I don't disagree with Youth Of Today because they were a straight edge band, I disagree with them....

ADAM: Some of their reasons for being straight edge weren't the best. KENT: Do you think that... the problem I have with it, I mean I don't see punk rock being too terribly effective on any level (*actually, I think it is extremely effective in many ways, but some punk is just shit*), but I think the political bands are so much less effective than the straight edge bands because they say all kinds of bullshit, but they never do anything.

ADAM: Well they set themselves up to be, I mean they ask for it, you know? I mean you just ask for it when you make all these promises and pretend that you're going to knock the system over. Conflict was like one of the best bands ever and they didn't knock over anything. They got big universal product codes on all their records now, and they're redistributing by Revolver which is part of E.M.I. and record called Only Stupid Bastards Help E.M.I., only they are distributed by Revolver which is part of E.M.I., I mean their problem which makes them so ineffectual is that they just totally paint themselves into a corner, so wherever they go they are going to turn into hypocrites. That's in the best of all possible worlds the reason why they don't do anything, in reality a lot of the reasons these people don't do anything is because they are just as lazy as I am, I mean they like television too.

SAM: I think some of the lyrics on our 7" that I wrote border on that kind of setting yourself up for something, which I'm being much more conscious of steering away from.

ADAM: What do you mean? Like "Half Mast?" Because I wrote that.

SAM: No, no, "Nine Years Latter," and "Witness To A Rape," to be specific, bordered a little too much towards all encompassing, being grand, like "What are we going to do about these problems?" And I really don't want to present my own lyric writing like that. The reason that I address those issues is because that fuels me to get up on a stage in front of fifty people and scream until my blood vessels burst, and whereas singing about friendships and blah, blah, blah wouldn't do it.

KENT: Wait, the friendship part aside, I mean I think that is the cop-out of everybody that criticizes straight edge, to say "unity and friendship," I mean my point is that legitimately the things that straight edge bands are talking about are actually achievable and affect people's lives, whereas a lot of things that the political bands are talking about don't affect anyone because no one is going to do anything. (*Specifically, I'm saying that straight edge at its fundamental base is offering a lifestyle change that people can and do achieve, and in that I believe they learn to take control of their lives and the quality of their life is heightened in the process, whereas few people are capable or are even willing to actively strive to achieve political change. Political ideas and discussion has a definite value, but there needs to be ways for*

people to address these issues in a tangible way. Abstaining from the use of products that are controlled by conservative and damaging corporations is an example of a tangible way to promote change, but it is unrealistic to believe that simply singing a song about war, starvation, or rape will affect these issues in any tangible way. If people decide to address these larger issues then they really need to formulate a realistic plan for action that can legitimately offer an alternative.]

ADAM: When we talk about that, and I know we really can't do it, but we would have to talk real specifics because there are straight edge bands that I'm really into that say this and that, like 7 Seconds... walk together, rock together, build your own scene, do your own fanzine, of course that was really cool, but Crippled Youth is supposed to be straight edge, ha ha, too, and "K-Town Mosh Crew," and "I'd like to see a skater punk sitting next to a mosh maniac" whatever... They're both supposed to be straight edge bands, and then you take like some ridiculous band like... I don't know, I don't want to talk extra, extra shit.

SAM: We can't even make up a name about that kind of name though, because all of those names have been covered. If we say Against The Wall, or whatever...

ADAM: No, I was going to use the example of peace punk bands, like you say a peace punk band that stayed small and did a lot of shit for, like whatever. Like M.D.C., they changed people on a personal level even though they are a political band. I always say it, I guess it is getting beaten to death, but the fucking day I bought Millions Of Dead Children I decided to become a vegetarian.

KENT: Didn't we all...

ADAM: So I'm just saying that that was achievable. To be a political band doesn't mean that you can't be personal. I think Ignition is extremely political and personal.

SAM: Yeah, Ignition did a beautiful job of that.

ADAM: And I think even some Fugazi songs handle it pretty well, like handle the border between personal and political pretty well, bringing it down to a real level.



Kirk's Comic Shop, 1/6/91, photo McClard

SAM: A lot of '70s feminists coined the slogan "personal is political" and that was mostly for bored housewives that didn't realize that all the shit they had thrown at them from their fucking husbands and their parents, that was political and they weren't isolated, and I think the slogan "personal is political" can be adapted very easily to us tough punk rockers.

JON: An interesting story that my mother told me: she used to go door to door to try to win people over for the E.R.A. back in the early '70s, and one of the quotes she told me a housewife said was "I don't like to sign petitions, I might get in trouble." That was the way of thinking.

SAM: That's it right there.

ADAM: Getting back to the trivializing the whole thing after he made that important statement, a band like Embrace didn't particularly sing about anything political, all their songs were basically about friendship or... and that's like one of my all time favorite records. It's the way it is handled with most of these straight edge bands, it's not really what they are talking

some of those bands I'm pretty much just into for the music.

JAVIER: I'm just into the music.

ADAM: We're not stupid enough to go out and try to make political theories out of grind core bands, but we do like them.

SAM: I feel a little weird doing a fanzine and being in a band now, especially the last issue I put out had our record in it, because I'm totally critical of all these other bands and then I put myself on the line...

ADAM: That's good.

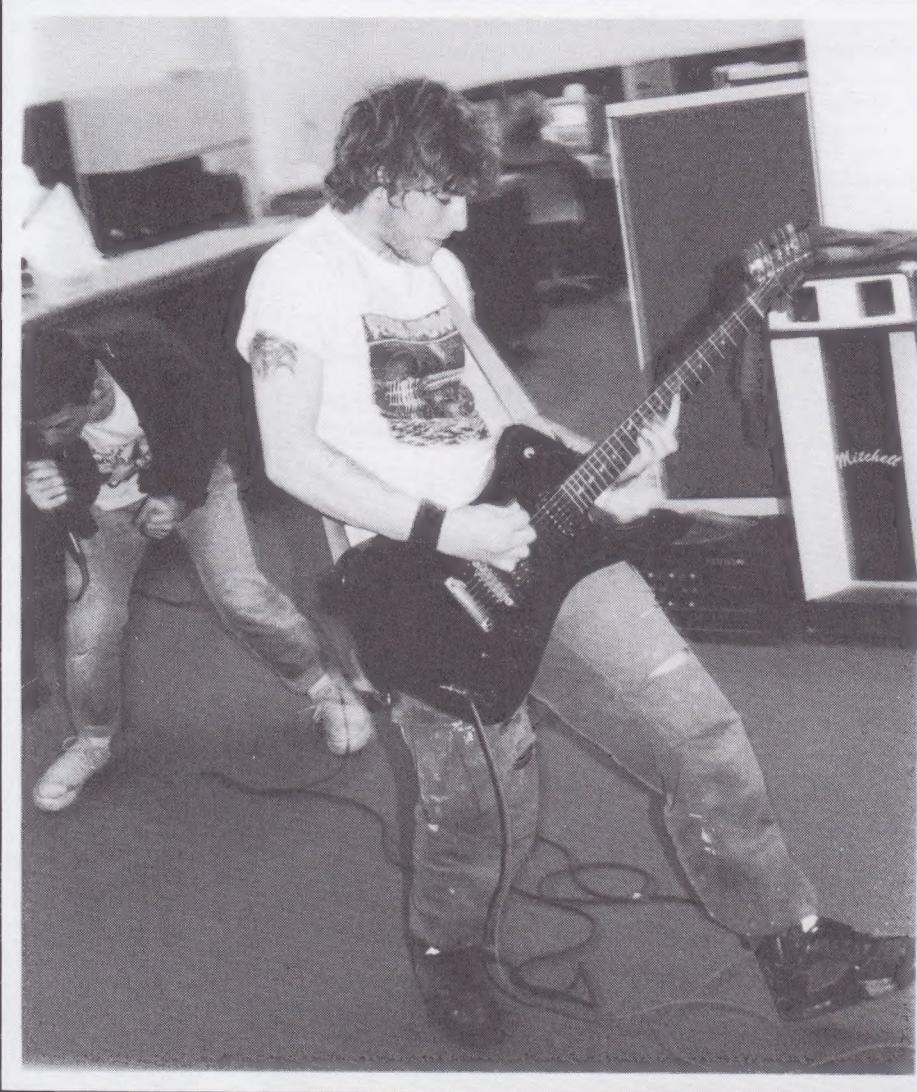
SAM: Yeah it's very good, I'm glad I'm doing it, yeah I'm glad I'm doing it because it's one more kick in the ass to Sam McPheeters, but...

ADAM: And he needs many more, and after this interview comes out he'll probably get them.

JAVIER: Not only in the head, but in your ass, ribs, back...

KENT: Where do you think you fit in, or do you think you do at all?

SAM: I think a lot of people don't know. Our plan right now is to just be totally fucking productive mother fuckers, just do as much shit as possible in the shortest amount of time and make people decide for themselves. We were having a problem with that for awhile. We had a lot of member problems, but things are pretty solid right now and we're moving at a good pace and



Kinko's Copie Shop, 1/6/91, photo McClard

about, it's not really

that they are talking about this subject that we have something against, it's the way it is handled, and it's handled with rhymes like head/dead, die/try, decide/ride... it's got that rhyme scheme—ab, ab thing.

SAM: Which renders it useless, which renders it ineffectual.

ADAM: I'm kind of insulted that they want me to listen to this thing that they put no thought or effort into, but I listen to the Embrace record and I know they put a whole shitload of thought and effort into it, just like when I opened up Millions Of Dead Children and I saw a big giant fucking poster and the music sounded really cool and everything else. I wasn't insulted because they took me as a person that was worth all this different information and that was intelligent enough to take it all in, but when I pick up the new Apocalyptic Genocide record on Earache and all the songs are just like...

JAVIER: Hugh, hugh, hugh, hugh... [fast]

ADAM: Yeah, that's insulting unless you're just into it for the music, and

Their dollar bills
establish the
boundaries, lets us
know that under-
ground music can
be bought. And,
make no mistake,
all they want
is your money,
and all they need is your
uncaring, numb
smile, all they demand
is your silence...

we'll be recording our LP in a couple of months, and doing a tour in the summer, and record after that, and get this record label going, and...

ADAM: I know we always bring it back to some hardcore band, but...

SAM: That's good, I think it's good that we're rooted in our own history.

ADAM: In a bad way, or maybe a good way, I'm narrow minded enough to always be making references to hardcore like I'm some fucking history teacher or something. The reason that I would imagine that the Teen Idles or Black Flag started is because those people

BORN AGAINST
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U.S.A.

there aren't people that we fit in with because there is a whole room of them out there I like, but that's the reason to get a band together. Even though those people started at more of a square one, we feel in some ways like we are starting at square one. In ideas we are starting at square one, whereas they had to start at square one materially as well, I mean they couldn't just go out and sell their records to people. There wasn't even a way to sell them.

Tonight I learned a grim and unsettling lesson on racism. I believe that vestiges of racism are present in each and every one of us, but I've never had it so openly displayed. I had an argument a few moments ago with someone who I deeply love and respect. This person is not a bigot, nor racist, and no, you don't know him or her, but this person does indeed suffer from the legacy of racism and from the mind set of white culture. The argument concerned the issues of affirmative action, justice, advantage, and responsibility.

and responsibility. The issue will be mine,

I believe that

race. African-a disproportionate the population at the bottom of the economic ladder. Their racial heritage is directly responsible for their poverty, and minorities, as a whole, are poor because they are minorities. They are disadvantaged and discriminated against because they are minorities. Furthermore, the United States enjoys its cause labor value an incredibly low cost.

economic standing was extracted from minorities at These minorities were denied their rightful value as workers (which ignores the fact that all workers are denied their value under capitalism) because of their race. Blacks were exploited as slaves, Asians literally built the railroads for free, and Hispanics/Latinos were forced to serve an agricultural system that paid them almost less than a subsistence wage, and in the case of Hispanics this is still occurring today. The end result was that resources accumulated in the hands of white America, while the various minorities were left with nothing.

As time went on the more overt forms of exploitation faded, but racism and the resulting discrimination perpetuated the cycle. White people were able to get better education and better jobs simply because they were white, and being black, brown or yellow became a disadvantage. America would like nothing more than to deny this reality today, but it is obvious that this cycle has in no way ended. Racism still exists.

My friend would like to see an end to racism. The approach taken is simple: do not evaluate people in terms of race. In other words, race is not an acceptable way of explaining the disproportionate percentage of minorities in the poverty region of the spectrum, and race is not an acceptable method of correcting past crimes. In fact, retribution or justice is a completely bad solution. My friend's argument is that s/he did not create this problem, nor desire past discrimination, and therefore s/he should not be punished. There is no justice in taking from those that did not cause the initial injustice. It is more like revenge. Affirmative action simple reinforces racial barriers and perpetuates the cycle of hate through reverse-discrimination. In other words, affirmative action is unfair and a totally bad solution.

Furthermore, the argument followed is that all humans have to take control of their own lives and responsibility for their position. All people are faced with oppression, and there is no way to say that one person's situation is any worse than another person's situation. We all have to learn to overcome this oppression. There is no way of knowing whether an individual minority person is suffering from racial oppression and therefore no way of rectifying that oppression. The only valid solution is to stop concerning ourselves with race. People are people, and yes they have problems, but these problems should not be defined in terms of race. If we are to transcend racism then we must move beyond race.

A portion of this argument is extremely valid. People do indeed need to take control of their lives and responsibility for their position. Minorities need to come to terms with their situation and they need to search out cures for the internal cultural problems that have arisen because of this extreme oppression. They alone can solve their own cultural failings, which in no way implies that their original racial culture is to blame, but only that our society has destroyed their culture and replaced it with a defective version. But at the same time, white people must come to terms with their

position and take control of their lives. Affirmative Action fits perfectly within this goal. White people need to acknowledge that they have certain advantages simply because they are white. That is simply a fact of our society. White people have better access to education, jobs, money, and power. The acculturation system within this country has a decidedly white bias. All forms of media are geared to white interests and white representation. We live in a white country.

Simply ignoring race will not end the inequality that is now present. All white people, myself included, have benefitted from racism. We have artificial advantages over minorities simply because we are white. Ending racism does not rectify these advantages. Without affirmative action and similar programs that offer compensation to minorities then the status quo shall be maintained.

My friend's solution is a white solution, and it ignores the realities

of equality. White people seem to live in this fantasy land where they somehow think that equality can be reached without whites themselves losing power. This simply is not feasible. There is only so much money and power to be had in this country. If minorities are going to rise, if they are going to gain their rightful percentage of the pie then white people are going to have to give up some of their pie. White people are going to have to lose their jobs and their advantage of opportunity. Past inequality must be rectified otherwise present inequalities and whites shall continue to be on without addressing past injustice is the white solution. It removes racism and clears the guilt from the collective white conscience, but at the same time white people do not have to give up their monopoly on power. It is a racist solution.

In the interest of equality and justice, white people must allow minorities to compete equally. This requires more than eliminating racial discrimination, it also requires that white people compensate minorities for the hardship they and their ancestors have suffered, and it requires that white people give up their advantages so that minorities can rise. There are two solutions that immediately come to mind.

The first is affirmative action. As white people we have an artificial advantage that we cannot deny. It is time that minorities enjoyed that advantage. It may seem painful to lose ones job or spot in college to a lesser qualified applicant simply because of race, but minorities have been forced to do this and so now we must learn to do so as well. We as white people are advantaged because minorities have been forced down, and therefore affirmative action is not reverse discrimination but instead it redistributes or rectifies past racism. That is indeed painful to the more advantaged who have grown accustomed to that advantage, but it is not unjust. The key thing to remember is that white people would not have such an easy time getting jobs and getting into higher education without the benefit of past racism.

The second solution is to offer superior education to minorities. They must have access to better teachers, better facilities, better opportunities, and cheaper tuition. By offering superior education to minorities we can create a situation where minorities are able to out compete whites for jobs. Eventually this would bring minority status up, and at some point the education systems could be equalized. It is important to realize that if minorities are to gain then we must lose. One way or the other, we must lose what we have stolen. They cannot rise unless we fall.

These are painful solutions, and they are difficult, as well. But racism, slavery, bigotry, and discrimination are painful crimes. Justice isn't always pleasant. Race is not a good way of categorizing a people, and at some point when racial equality is attained then this needs to be transcended. But for now white people must carry the burden of our race. White people oppressed Black, Yellow, Brown, and Red people. White people enslaved Black, Yellow, Brown, and Red people. White people murdered Black, Yellow, Brown, and Red people. White people discriminated against Black, Yellow, Brown, and Red people. White people did this because of race and skin color. White people must now give back all that they have taken. As a white person, as white people we must learn to give up the advantages that were stolen from us. Justice demands it. Equality demands it. We must demand it. — Kent

I'm sorry

for something I didn't do. Lynched somebody, but I don't know who.

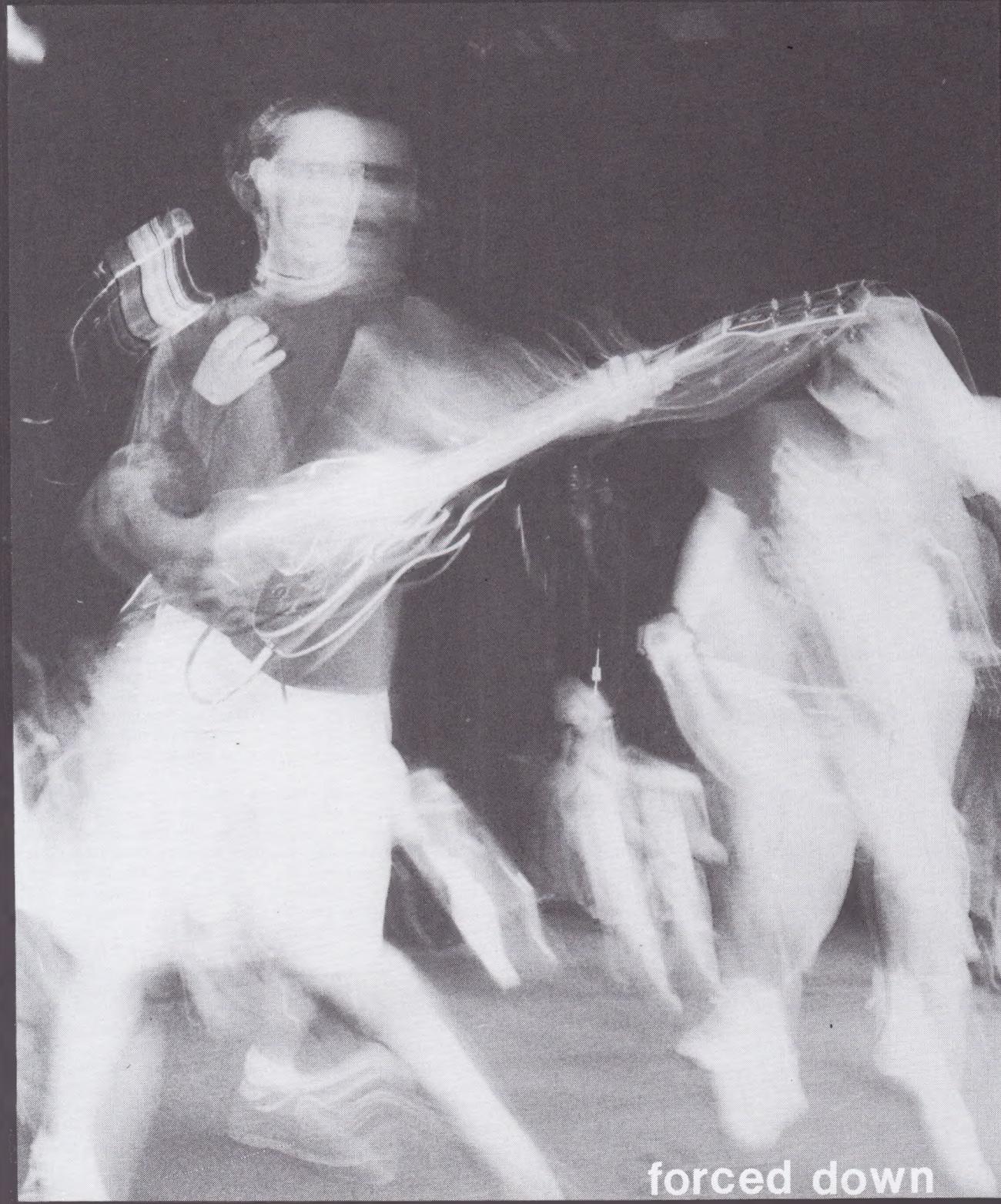
You blame me for slavery a hundred years before I was born. Guilty of being white. I'm a convict of a racist crime. I've only served 19 years of my time.

Guilty of being white.

Guilty...

SKIN CLAMMY. BUTTERFLIES BEATING, THRASHING INSIDE MY GUT. LAYER OF SWEAT ADHERING TO THE ENDS OF MY HAIR. MUSCLES SHAKE. MIND IS LOOSE, FLUTTERING. ALIVE, BUT SCARED, SO SCARED OF THE PAIN, OF FAILURE, OF NOTHING REALLY TANGIBLE. JUST SCARED. EMOTIONS ON OVERDRIVE. HEART PUMPING, ABOUT TO EXPLODE, PUMPING THE BLOOD THROUGH THE VEINS, STREAMS OF EXCITEMENT, NOT BLOOD BUT EXCITEMENT. FEEL. FEEL. EXPLODE. EBULLITION DEEP INSIDE. PERSONAL. ALIVE.

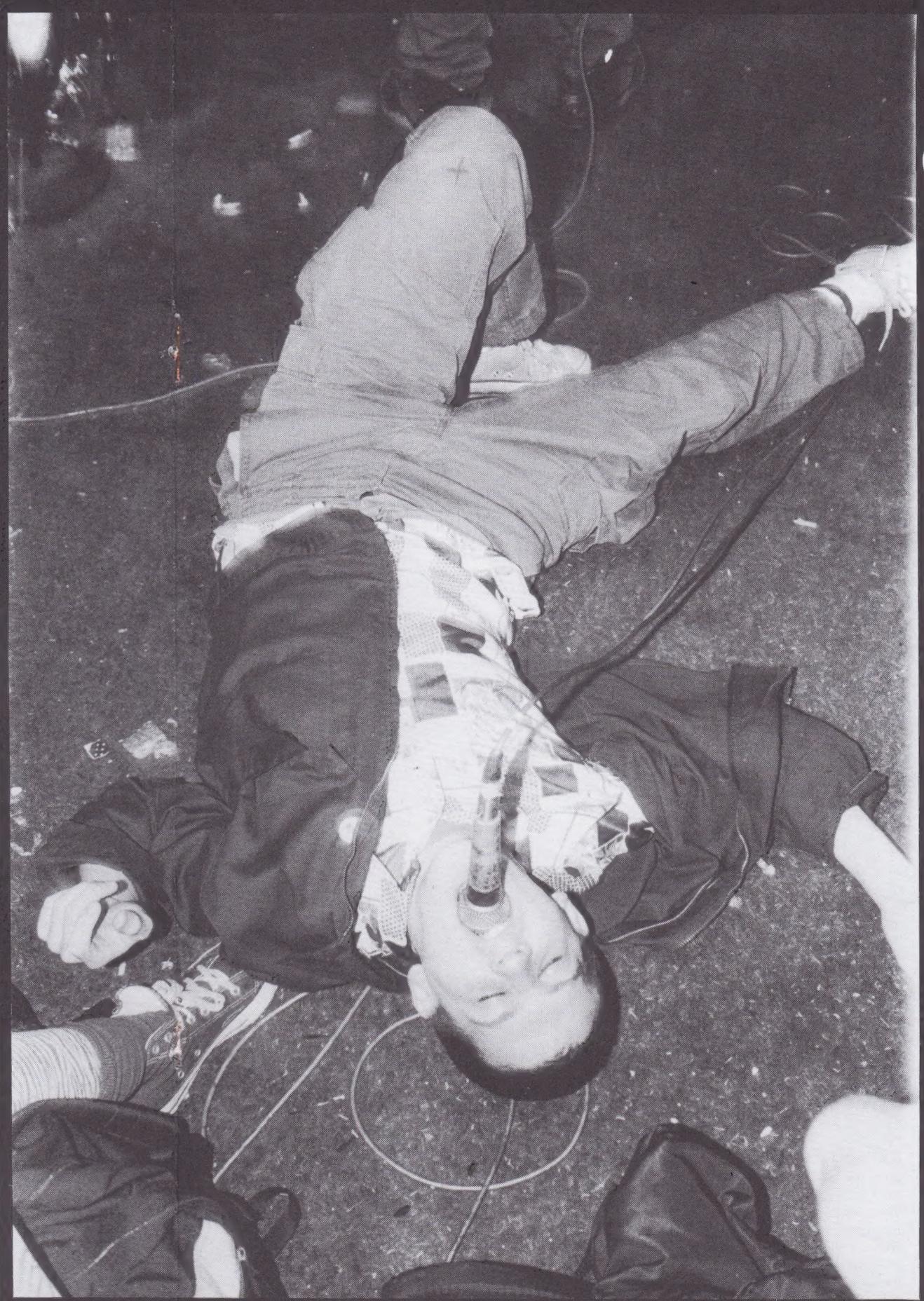
The Backdoor, 11/30/90, photo McClard



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Gilman Street, 1/11/91, photo McClard

ONE DAY
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